A MASTER-BUILDER ON THE CONGO

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A Master Builder on the Congo.

Gift from Mrs Bertha Dutt in memory of
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MR. AND MRS. ELDRED, WITH BABY MPELA AND SOME OF THE ORPHANS. (BOLENGE, 1904)

A MASTER BUILDER ON THE CONGO

A Memorial
to the
Service and Devotion
of
ROBERT RAY ELDRED
and
LILLIAN BYERS ELDRED

BY

ANDREW F. HENSEY
Author of "Opals from Africa"

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ILLUSTRATED

With an Introduction by
ARCHIBALD McLEAN

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INTRODUCTION

ROBERT RAY and Edith Byers Eldred, the hero and heroine of this book, gave their lives for the redemption of Africa as truly as did Melville B. Cox or Alexander Mackay. They lived sacrificial lives and rejoiced that to them was this grace given, that they should preach among primitive and pagan people the unsearchable riches of Christ. Like Livingstone, they were ready for any movement, provided it was a forward movement. Like Paul, they made it their aim so to preach the gospel, not where Christ was already named, that they might not build upon another man's foundation. Like the Moravians, their desire was to give to the Lamb that was slain the reward of His sufferings.

Both laid down their lives in Africa and for Africa. Mrs. Eldred died on the Bussira with no other white woman near to wipe the death-damp from her brow or to speak words of comfort and hope in her last moments. Mr. Eldred died while pioneering in a part of the field far beyond where any other missionary had ever been.

It was because of the heroism and unselfish devotion and nobleness of their lives and the fruitfulness of their services that this book was written. The writer is a graduate of the same school as Mr. Eldred—The College of The Bible, of Transylvania University, and was associated with him and his wife in their work as missionaries. Mr. Hensey has written with the fullest knowledge of the facts re-

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lating to the character and ministry of Mr. and Mrs. Eldred, and, because he has, his book will be read with profound interest and with genuine admiration for the hero and heroine.

ARCHIBALD MCLEAN.

Cincinnati, Ohio.

FOREWORD

"RAY ELDRED drowned. Reinforcements imperative."

When the above message was flashed under the seas and across the lands in September of 1913 it brought to the Disciples of Christ a sorrow that was almost pain. There were few churches among that people in which the name of Robert Ray Eldred was not known and his devotion appreciated. Many, as they read the startling news, remembered having heard him plead with passionate enthusiasm for Congo's evangelization. As they recalled his massive frame and evident strength, it seemed difficult to believe that the sad news was really true.

Two months had to ensue before the details of his passing could come by mail. When these arrived and were read in the papers, the story of his tragic death and forest burial passed into the household life of the Disciples and his lonely grave on the banks of the Lokolo is coming to be counted among their choice heritages.

But the friends of Ray Eldred feel that the life and labours of this man of God ought to be as well known as the story of his heroic death. His comrades in the African field would have the churches know some of the things which made this leader so large a part of the life of the Congo Mission that, when he had fallen, it seemed imperative that reinforcements should be sent at once to take his place.

Can a real man's place be filled? Aye, the workers fall, and God fills up the ranks, for His work must go on till the last man hear the Good Tidings of the Son of God. And His work on the Congo goes on, mayhap with more of impetus and surely in deeper

spiritual currents. For the spirit of sacrifice and of apostolic evangelism has been written large in the history of the Congo Mission. Yet sometimes in the councils of the missionaries, when simple faith and wise decision are needed; ofttimes, when one sits beneath roof-trees made sacred by the labour of those hands now still in death, and hears appeals from distant villages for the Gospel he loved so well to preach; each time,

"Whenever the weak and weary are ridden down by the strong,
Whenever the right pleads clearly while the lords of life are dumb,"

all those who knew the spirit of Ray Eldred feel a pang of loneliness and of longing, and realize that such a man's place is never entirely filled.

Therefore, for all he was and is, these pages are written, as a loving memorial to the devotion of Ray Eldred, missionary, pioneer, and friend. As the modest work of Mrs. Eldred has been less known than that of her husband, many friends of the Congo work will be glad to learn more of this gifted woman, and of her service.

Yet not alone as a memorial is this life story told. He who builded in such heroic fashion would care little to be remembered unless his faith and deeds should appeal to the latent heroism of the Church. So we may well believe that this Master Builder of the Congo would like to have his life sound out some such challenge as is breathed in the poet's prayer:

"Loud rings on sea and land today
The challenge of a work to do
As in the furnace of time
God moulds this worn-out world anew.
Oh, strip us of our love of ease,
Send full on us Thy challenge clear,
And let us catch the far-off glow
Of Thy great walls—then let us go
And build their splendour here!"

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BOOK I

I

PREPARATION DAYS

ROBERT RAY ELDRED was born September twenty-fourth, 1872, on a farm north of Quincy, Michigan. He was the second son of Joseph and Thirza Eldred. Leroy M. Eldred, Mrs. Frank McGee, both older than the subject of this sketch, and W. G. Eldred, minister of the Christian Church at Eminence, Kentucky, and Mrs. Laura Eldred Dobson, both younger than Robert Ray, complete the family of five children, who grew to maturity in that farmhouse three miles from Quincy. The death of Robert Ray caused the first break in the family circle, followed by the home-going of the mother in the Spring of 1915.

A single glance at the massive frame of the father, rugged in his strength even at the age of seventy-five, indicates that the splendid physique and fine constitution of Ray Eldred were paternal gifts. The vigorous open-air life of the farm cherished and developed these choice heritages.

The varied life of that farm—fruit growing, stock raising, and general agriculture—also helped in the training of young Ray. In addition to being a good farmer, the father was an excellent carpenter and built his own dwelling. The little shop where he did cabinet work in the winter time had a strong fascination for the three boys, and as they grew up they came to use tools as readily as did their father. It

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is interesting to note in this connection that Ray was left-handed, just as was his father, and learned to handle tools with either hand with almost equal ease and skill. The years were to show how wonderfully valuable this kind of training would prove, when the young toiler should become a Master Builder in a far-away land.

Neither in the family circle nor among the playmates of his boyhood do they tell tales of precocity shown by young Eldred. His sister, Mrs. Dobson, to whom the writer is indebted for all his information regarding those early days, says, "His was a normal, hearty childhood. Ray was perhaps rather more quiet than the average boy, yet with his brothers and the neighbourhood lads he entered into all the sports of boyhood."

A little low country schoolhouse furnished the chance for early education. The record of his school days is not one of brilliancy, but rather of careful plodding. He did not learn quite so easily as some of his companions, but that which he did learn was mastered and rarely forgotten. This part of his education only took him as far as what is commonly called the "eighth grade."

The Eldred home was deeply influenced by religious principles. The father and mother were Christians before the children came into the home and no day was busy enough for the family altar to be neglected. Then there was a little Christian Church in Quincy, in which Joseph Eldred was the leading spirit. And in the Eldred home the invariable custom was for all to go to church every Lord's Day. Thus into their growing minds was instilled the conviction that the interests of the Kingdom come first. Every fall a protracted meeting was

held, in which the preaching was done by some able exponent of the Word of God. These yearly meetings were always a season of especial happiness to the father, for he was a studious as well as a devout Christian and could, on occasion, preach very acceptably. They were even more so when, one after another, all the children were enrolled as followers of Jesus Christ. The baptism of Robert Ray occurred on November eighth, 1885, soon after his thirteenth birthday.

The little church of the Disciples at Quincy was never strong and had a struggling existence, but Joseph Eldred was a man of deep convictions in his religious life. He wished his children to hear the Gospel in its primitive simplicity and appeal and to study the Bible without the prejudices of creeds. So at great personal sacrifice he kept up this church through the years.

At about the age of nineteen young Eldred went away from home to work. One may judge how deeply his religious training had affected his life by the testimony of his friends that he had never smoked, tasted intoxicants, nor uttered an oath. After some months at other places he went to work on a farm fifteen miles northwest of Danville, Illinois.

While working there in the summer of 1893, S. H. Creighton and W. C. Swartz held a meeting for the Christian Church at Charity, near which was this farm. Mr. Swartz became very much interested in the young farmhand, who was so devoted to the Church and who had so keen a desire for knowledge. Being a student at Eureka College, and only doing evangelistic work during vacations, he talked much of his College to young Eldred. The latter became so much interested in the thought of getting an education

that, before the meeting closed, he decided to go to Eureka College with Mr. Swartz and study for the ministry.

Mr. (now Dr.) Swartz had been watching the young man and had seen his real character. A baby had died in the neighbourhood and while Ray was working sixteen hours a day on the farm he sat up all night with the body and the next day acted as undertaker. Dr. Swartz says of him, "With all his massive frame and large hands, I noticed then that he had a tender heart, which, in my acquaintance since, he has always shown."

Others did not agree with Dr. Swartz in his estimate of young Eldred. Many said to him, "If you can make a preacher out of him you can out of anything, for he will never make a preacher." Nevertheless, the eyes of Dr. Swartz seemed able to see into the future. Writing now of his influence in persuading this young man to become a preacher of Christ, he says, "I am glad that the little I had to do with R. Ray Eldred was done, because, had I not done that, many who love the Christ in Africa and many in America who mourn the loss of a great man, would not have known him. Their lives would not have been touched and brightened by his splendid life."

It was in September, 1893, that Ray Eldred entered Eureka College, being nearly twenty-one years old. He spent two years under such teachers as President Johann and Professors Radford, Hieronymus, and Deweese. Those who knew him in his first weeks in school remember him as somewhat shy and retiring, but his frankness, honesty, and great heart made him many friends among the student body. He took an active part in athletics,

becoming centre on the football eleven. As he had had only a common school education he found that he had a long task before him, especially as he was obliged to work his way. But he went at his education earnestly and Professor Radford writes of him, "Ray Eldred was in all ways an admirable young man. I never knew a more manly, unselfish, conscientious student."

After two years it became necessary to stay out of school for a time to earn enough to complete his education, so he went to South Bend, Indiana, where two years were spent. Throwing himself heart and soul into the work of the First Christian Church of that city, he became acquainted, in Bible School and Christian Endeavour activities, with a lady destined to play a large part in his future, Miss Edith Byers.

On a farm near Medaryville, Indiana, Edith Lillian Byers was born October fifth, 1871. After completing her common school education she went to St. Joseph, Michigan, to make her own way in life. Later she went to South Bend, in her own state. Aspiring to something higher than mere manual labour, she worked and studied very diligently, though she was only thirteen years of age when she left home. She attended the South Bend Commercial College at night, and completed the courses in Stenography, Banking, and Expert Accounting. Success came to her in this field, and before long she came to be expert accountant for one of the largest mercantile firms in the city.

Miss Byers became a Christian at the age of twenty, being baptized by Robert Sellers, now at Ellwood, Indiana. At once she became active in the First Christian Church of South Bend, and was for several years Secretary and Treasurer of the

Bible School. She was an attractive, cultured young lady, and Ray Eldred found her to be "the one woman."

The acquaintance of Ray Eldred and Miss Byers ripened into love, and when he left, in the Fall of 1897, for the completion of his college course, it was understood that in due time he should return to claim his bride.

This time he went to the College of the Bible of Kentucky University, now Transylvania College, at Lexington, Kentucky. There he spent five years and was centre for several years on one of the best football teams that historic school has ever had, and came to be much beloved by his schoolfellows. But this young athlete was a real student also, and during those Lexington years he drank deeply of the ripe scholarship of President J. W. McGarvey and Professors Loos, Grubbs, Jefferson, and his Eureka friend, Professor Deweese. He loved and honoured all his teachers, but the friendship between him and Prof. B. C. Deweese came to be very intimate and continued as long as Mr. Eldred lived. Therefore that which Professor Deweese writes of his pupil and friend is well worth recording here:

"I first met R. Ray Eldred at Eureka College. As a student there he was always diligent, never failing to appear thoroughly prepared for his class work. His professors would all agree that fidelity and earnestness and something above average ability, with singleness of aim, were his chief characteristics as a student. His work was evenly done. He did not have the marks of a genius, but his professors and fellow students soon learned that he could be counted on for successful work in every task he undertook.

"In athletics, even, this was fully illustrated. He never scrapped, but when his time came for his place in team work he never failed to make good. If a difficulty arose he stood quietly by until it was settled and then played the game with all his might in a manly way. What has now been said justified expectations that when wise counsel, infinite patience, untiring zeal, and fidelity to spiritual interests were essential he would never fail to do the things which were of most value to the welfare of the work."

Ray Eldred's years at the College of the Bible were especially delightful, because his younger brother, W. G., was there with him. They had been especially close in boyhood and "Ray" and "Gay" were generally together in any pranks in those days. Now their fellowship in the study for the ministry was almost perfect and grew richer with passing years.

When four years had passed he returned to South Bend and was married to Miss Byers August fourth, 1901, in the First Christian Church. There had been no announcement of the wedding, but at the close of the sermon the minister, Mr. Perry J. Rice, now of El Paso, Texas, asked the people to be seated. Then Mr. Eldred and Miss Byers walked quietly down to the front and were married by Mr. Rice.

The latter writes of his impressions of them at that time:

"I am very glad indeed to tell you what I know of Mr. and Mrs. Eldred, as they were our very dear friends. Mr. Eldred worked for some time in the Studebaker factory and Mrs. Eldred was a stenographer, holding various positions. Both of them were faithful and loyal members of the church, work-

ing in the Sunday School and in the Christian Endeavour Society. Mrs. Eldred was a member of the church when I became its pastor, but Mr. Eldred had left for college. My first acquaintance with him was when he returned at vacation time for a brief visit with his friends. Mrs. Eldred was not strong physically and spent some time after I became acquainted with her in the Southwest for the benefit of her health. She was always quiet and retiring, but was known as a worker to whom any duty that might be assigned would be faithfully and efficiently done. Mr. Eldred was regarded as a man of pronounced convictions and earnest purpose. He was strong in body and willing to use his strength to the utmost of his ability. They were both very highly regarded by the people of the church, but I think Mrs. Eldred had an exceptionally fast hold upon the affections of the people."

That Fall found them both at Kentucky University, he completing his ministerial course and Mrs. Eldred studying music. She had always been fond of all kinds of fancy sewing, embroidery, and such things, and in the midst of the busy school life found time to increase her skill in those accomplishments, which were destined to be of much help in her life work.

Mr. Eldred had preached his first sermon in January of 1896, and during those college days he preached on Sundays, thus preparing himself in a very practical way for his future work. Many of the outlines of those early sermons have been preserved and give evidence of his thoroughness.

No one seems to know just when or where Ray Eldred decided to become a missionary. His sister, Mrs. Dobson, writes, " It was in these college days

that he faced the problem of the needs on the frontier of the Kingdom. The spirit of the Puritan ancestors and the trend of all his training were in accord on questions of duty. To see a need, to be able to meet that need, meant to go straight ahead in its accomplishment. To him opportunity was the call of God, and the man whom He prepared simply and naturally for His work answered the call, since he was 'man and master of his fate.'"

It is certain that he was a very active member of the College Y.M.C.A., both at Eureka and at Lexington, and that he was deeply interested in a Mission Study class taught by Mrs. A. R. Bourne, then Dean of Women at Kentucky University, and now holding the same position at Bethany College.

His younger brother, W. G. Eldred, writes: "As to the mission field—the Student Volunteer Movement, of which he was a member, gave his ambitions definite direction. I heard him say once, in reply to a question as to how he came to be a missionary, that he had always wanted to be a missionary since he was a boy. I think the seed thought was planted in the home life. It was nurtured and developed by the church and college."

It may be that this item, which appeared in the *Missionary Intelligencer* for May, 1902, had something to do with his decision to go to Africa at once:

"The Society has been searching for a single man to go to Africa, to teach the boys trades and to prepare them in other ways for their life work. Thus far a suitable man has not volunteered."

At any rate it came to pass that in May of that year Mr. and Mrs. Eldred were appointed as missionaries of the Foreign Christian Missionary Society

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to Bolenge, Congo Free State, and this item appeared in *The Intelligencer* for July of that year:

"R. R. Eldred and wife, of Lexington, Kentucky, have been appointed to go to Africa to assist in the work. Mr. Eldred will have charge of the mechanical department. He will teach the boys trades. At the same time he will preach the Gospel and assist the work in every way in his power."

As the time drew near for him to graduate in the class of 1902 Mr. Eldred was ordained to the ministry by his beloved teacher, President McGarvey. Then, when Commencement Day was past, a farewell meeting was held at the South Side (now Maxwell Street) Christian Church, where they were members. It was a beautiful Lord's Day in June, and parting messages were delivered by President McGarvey, Professor Loos, and the minister of the church, J. B. Hunley, who was a college friend. Mr. and Mrs. Eldred sang together the stirring missionary song, "Speed away," and the venerable president of the College lifted up a prayer of consecration. All present were deeply moved and Mr. Hunley wrote of these newly chosen missionaries, "They were glad in the Lord that day and went forth to their work with a song in their hearts."

Mr. Eldred at this time had the figure of the typical athlete, standing a trifle over six feet high and weighing about one hundred and seventy pounds. His complexion was rather fair, his eyes blue, and his hair of the colour commonly called sandy.

After parting visits to friends and loved ones, they sailed from New York August second, 1902. Besides their household goods, some carpenter tools and a blacksmithing outfit were included in their baggage.

II

THE OPENING UP OF AFRICA

NO picture of Ray Eldred's career in that land of his choice will be either vivid or complete without the background of at least a rough sketch of its opening to civilization and the Gospel.

Up to the year 1870 Africa had attracted little attention, and the possessions there of European countries were neither extensive nor apparently valuable. Despite the attention paid to David Livingstone's travels, which began in 1851, and to those of other explorers of many nationalities, who had really added much to the knowledge of the Dark Continent, the world as a whole had not yet taken Africa seriously into its field of interest. Later it was to give tardy honour to the valiant pioneer work of Livingstone, who from 1851 to 1873 had been breaking the way through its trackless plains and forests. For he traced the course of the Zambesi River, explored the regions about Lakes Nyasa and Tanganyika, crossed the continent from Zambesi to the Portuguese settlements south of the Congo, and even discovered the headwaters of the Congo, though he died in the belief that he had found the head stream of the Nile. Clapperton, Denham, and the Lander brothers in their explorations of the Central Soudan and the Niger River awakened some interest. Dr. Barth, because of his scientific studies of the Lake Chad district, du Chaillu in his marvellous travels

over the Gaboon River region, and Burton, Speke, Grant, and Baker, who traced the Nile River from its mouth to its source in Lake Albert Nyanza, and discovered Lake Victoria Nyanza, all helped in calling attention to Africa. And to them must be added many others whose exploits African history has not forgotten.

But it remained for Cameron, who explored the region between the Zanzibar coast on the East and the Portuguese settlements near Benguella on the West Coast; for du Brazza, who explored the whole area between the Gaboon River and the Congo during the years from 1874 to 1884; for Stanley, who found Livingstone in 1873, and for Livingstone's lonely death that year, to attract the attention, not only of Governments, but of the general public, to this then unknown land. By the time Stanley returned from his second voyage in 1877, with the news of the discovery of the Congo and its mighty tributaries, the whole world was decidedly interested in Africa.

As if in response to a trumpet call, books were written, great meetings were held, scientific societies were formed, governmental expeditions were sent out, until the next decade saw not only the larger part of the Continent explored in a general way, but by treaty, purchase, conquest, protectorate, "sphere of influence," intervention, colonization, or other method, the whole of its vast areas had been partitioned among European Governments. And today the only portion of Africa ruled by the coloured race is the tiny Republic of Liberia, and even it is not ruled by natives, but by descendants of negroes who emigrated from the United States.

The limits of this book confine our attention to the

opening up of that part of Africa to which Mr. Eldred had been appointed as a missionary.

In 1876, King Leopold II of Belgium presided over a conference at Brussels of some forty scientists, diplomats, and publicists from all the leading countries of Europe, called together to discuss the question of founding a society for the exploration of Central Africa, and the suppression of the slave trade. So enthusiastically did this conference enter into the question that out of its deliberations there came into being the "International African Association," with headquarters at Brussels. On his return from the discovery of the Congo River, Stanley attached himself to this association, especially to that department of its activities known as the "Committee for the Study and Investigation of the Upper Congo."

Under the direction of this Committee Sir H. M. Stanley went to the Congo region, and in the years between 1879 and 1884 explored the Congo River, established stations along its banks, struck hard blows at the slave trade, and mapped out for his Association a huge area of some 900,000 square miles. In 1882, this association was changed into a corporation, called the "International Association of the Congo," with King Leopold as its president, and an energetic attempt was made to develop the trade of the Congo basin. But by this time a number of international complications had arisen, touching much of Western Africa, so a "West African Conference" was convened in Berlin, holding its first session on November fifteenth, 1884. As a result of this Conference the "État Indépendant du Congo," better known as the "Congo Free State," was proclaimed as a new member of the family of the nations, at Banana, at

the mouth of the Congo River, July nineteenth, 1885, with King Leopold as its sovereign.

During these stirring years the missionary cause had not been neglected. Modern Protestant Missions began their work in Africa in 1732, and when the great awakening of interest in Africa came to the world, it came also to the Church, especially in England and Scotland. Missionary Societies came into being with marvellous rapidity at this call of Africa's needy children, and there was a real outburst of missionary zeal for the evangelization of that continent. And that zeal was nowhere more marked than in the sending of the Gospel to the Congo basin. The year 1877 witnessed the decision of the Baptist Missionary Society of Great Britain to enter that field, and the organization of the Livingstone Inland Mission, an interdenominational society, likewise of Great Britain. Before Stanley had reached England on his return from his discovery of the courses of the Congo River, missionaries from both these Societies were on the way, reaching the Lower River in 1878.

These pioneers suffered almost incredible privations, and their ranks were soon thinned by death. For, in addition to the tropical climate and the prevalence of the dreaded African fever, they found that the Congo has so many cataracts between Matadi and Stanley Pool that it is not navigable for that section. This made it necessary that the trip of two hundred and twenty miles be made on foot around the cataracts to Stanley Pool, where open navigation begins. From there on the river is known as the Upper Congo. This overland trip, made largely over burning plains, hills, and rocks, occupied at least two weeks, and to those who were unused to such a

climate, and who had little knowledge as to how to prevent fever, and very meagre supplies and equipment, it was a perilous journey. But they struggled on, the choice youth of England and Scotland and Ireland filled up the gaps in the ranks, and soon mission stations began to dot not only the Lower but the Upper River, and several mission steamers, transported in sections on the heads of native carriers, began to ply the upper reaches of the river and its tributaries. In those days of stress and strain and death the names of Bentley, Craven, Grenfell, Sims, Comber, Billington, Banks, Peterson, McKittrick, Hartland, Richards, and a host of others, were written high on the missionary honour roll.

Some of these were explorers as well, especially George Grenfell, who was to the Congo country what Livingstone was to Zambesia and Nyasaland. Between the years 1878 and 1906 he discovered the Ubangi tributary and explored many of the other tributaries—the Kasai, Lomami, Lefini, Mongala, Ruki or Bussira, Lulanga, Aruimi, and Kwango rivers. His death likewise was similar to that of Livingstone, for he was taken sick at the lonely station of Yalemba, far up the Congo, and during most of his illness was attended only by his two faithful native servants.

In 1884 the Livingstone Inland Mission turned its stations and steamers over to the American Baptists, but re-entered the field again in 1888 under the name of the Congo Balolo Mission. The next decade saw the stations of the English and American Baptists stretched along the main Congo from its mouth to Stanley Falls; the Swedish Missionary Society, with a number of stations in the territory drained by the Lower Congo; an important Mission of the Southern

Presbyterians (U.S.A.) established by Lapsley on the higher waters of the Kasai River; the Congo Balolo Mission occupying the Lulanga-Maringa River system; Arnot's Garenganze Mission of the Plymouth Brethren pluckily striving to evangelize the great Katanga country; and the Christian and Missionary Alliance founding their stations at and out from Boma, the capital of the Congo Free State.

During the years just preceding 1897 the attention of the Disciples was directed to the Congo, and in February of that year their Foreign Christian Missionary Society sent out two splendid young men, Mr. E. E. Faris and Dr. H. N. Biddle. They were to look over the situation, and, if thought advisable, to locate a station. These missionaries found, on their arrival at Matadi, the chief port of the Free State, that part of the discomfort and danger of travel around the cataracts had been eliminated by the completion of the Congo Railway from Matadi to Tumba. As this was about half the distance to Stanley Pool, Messrs. Faris and Biddle had only half the former caravan journey to make on foot. The railway was soon after this extended to Stanley Pool, so no other of the missionaries of the F.C.M.S. have found it necessary to undergo the ordeal of the overland journey. The building of this railway, though at the cost of many lives, has been a potent factor in the missionary as well as commercial development of the Congo country, and remains as a monument to the foresight and energy of the late Colonel Thys.

The story of the search of these two young men for a strategic location would make a book by itself, but the limits of space forbid even a sketch here. After more than a year of journeying, enduring

many hardships, Dr. Biddle became seriously ill and started home, hoping that the sea air would revive his failing strength. But the hope was in vain, so when the steamer reached Las Palmas in the Canary Islands he was taken on shore, where he died October eighth, 1898. It was never his privilege to do the work he had hoped to do, but the influence of this brave kindly physician inspired all who came after him.

About this time the American Baptists, for various reasons, found it necessary to give up their station at Bolenge, on the Upper Congo, near the mouth of the Bussira (Ruki) River. This station had been founded four miles farther up river, at Wangata, in 1884, by the Livingstone Inland Mission, and known by them as "Equator Station," because between there and Bolenge the Congo crosses the Equator. The station was transferred to Bolenge in 1889 by the American Baptists. Mr. Faris, having visited the station and looked over its field in the Bussira region, recommended to his Society that Bolenge be obtained. The Disciples took over the station from the Baptists early in 1899, and in April Dr. and Mrs. Royal J. Dye joined Mr. Faris at Bolenge.

These three workers began the work in an energetic way. First of all the language had to be learned, but that difficulty did not deter them. Their first efforts at preaching were feeble ones, but they struggled on, soon gaining a good working knowledge of the language.

Dr. Dye began his medical work, which filled a dire need, not alone because of the disease and sufferings of the natives, but because the witch-doctor dominated the whole life of the people. Deceit and charms made up the larger part of his

treatment. After a time, by means of the medical work, the influence of the most powerful witch-doctor was broken, and his personal sympathy won.

The day school was given much attention, and from among those who learned to read in those early days have come some of the leading preachers of these later days.

Mrs. Dye gathered the women together, and taught them, not only of Jesus and His salvation, but of the things which go to make up woman's place in the world's life.

In October, 1900, Mr. Faris left on furlough, and Dr. and Mrs. Dye, with their little daughter Polly, were alone on the station until the coming of Mr. and Mrs. F. T. Lea, in May 1901, followed by Dr. and Mrs. E. A. Layton, in August. As Mr. and Mrs. Lea had been four years in Angola, their health compelled them to leave in September. Then Dr. and Mrs. Dye started for America in February, 1902.

This brings us to the time of our story.

III

ARRIVAL AT BOLENGE

MR. AND MRS. ELDRED made the journey to the Congo in company with Mr. and Mrs. E. E. Faris. As already noted, Mr. Faris was one of the two pioneer missionaries of the Foreign Christian Missionary Society, and was now returning from his furlough, taking with him his young bride. After buying their supplies in England, the party of four took passage on a Belgian steamer. A journey of three weeks down the West African Coast, and one hundred and twenty-five miles up the Congo River, brought them to Matadi, already noted as the chief port of the Congo Free State. Leaving the ocean steamer, they took, at Matadi, a train for Léopoldville, on Stanley Pool. This is the narrow gauge railway mentioned in the previous chapter. It is a triumph in engineering, but it is far from a success in comfort, though there has been much improvement since those days. But missionaries expect some discomforts, so the two days on this dusty, hot, jolting train, were cheerfully endured.

When they reached Léopoldville, they found a Government steamer just ready to start up river, so embarked at once, leaving nearly all their baggage behind. This was rather inconvenient for the ladies, but they managed somehow. Then the table was not quite as neat or the fare as palatable as that to which they were accustomed, but they managed that also. Yet they were more than glad when the eight days'

journey was over, and on October second, just two months to a day from the time they left New York, they reached Bolenge. It is needless to say that they were heartily welcomed by Dr. and Mrs. Layton and their little daughter Lita, for they had been alone on the station for eight months.

They found that Bolenge was a really beautiful mission station. Laid out on a level space at the top of a high bank overlooking the river, planted with fruit and shade trees, ornamented with flowers and foliage plants and divided into plots, velvety with green grass, by palm and acacia lined paths, it stood out in marked contrast to the monotony of the Congo forest.

They found two dwelling houses, a frame church building, serving also as a schoolhouse, and a galvanized iron store building, as well as some temporary structures for various purposes. The station and its buildings were largely the result of the labours of Mr. and Mrs. C. B. Banks, first of the Livingstone Inland Mission, and later of the American Baptists. Mr. Banks had been located at Wangata and at Bolenge from 1887 to 1899, where his labours had been unbounded, and no description of Bolenge could be complete without paying tribute to him. He fell asleep in Jesus in 1900, but his toils and prayers and preaching were soon to see their fruition.

Mr. and Mrs. Eldred found themselves in the midst of a people calling themselves the Bankundo. At Bolenge, contact with white people had wrought some changes in even the most uncivilized. But the first villages away from the river were little touched by such influence, and these new missionaries soon began to see the problems by which they were confronted, and which they were to help solve.

The Bankundo people are one of the almost numberless tribes which go to make up the Bantu race, which inhabits nearly all of Central Africa, south of the Soudan.

To understand the problems of their evangelization, it must be remembered first of all that most of the Congo Free State is contained in a low basin, which has been thought by scientists like Grenfell, to have been, in prehistoric times, an inland sea. Today it is covered by one huge, dense forest, with a denser jungle of undergrowth, a large portion of this forest growing in marshy ground. In the high water season, all these marshy parts become swamps, while many of them are swamps during the entire year. The villages are just the high, dry places which have been cleared in that forest, and one must always keep in mind that they are not cities, but tiny hamlets, whose inhabitants number ordinarily from two hundred to a thousand people. Imagine, then, this kind of village scattered everywhere through that sort of a forest, tied together by narrow footpaths, that twist and wind through swamp and jungle, and you have the physical problem. So isolated are the villagers who dwell in these forest hamlets that most of them have never seen the horizon. All they know is that God's blue sky comes down and meets the tops of the trees, and beyond that their vision has never gone. Well may they be called the "Children of the Forest."

The houses of these villages are built of poles and bamboo, thatched with plaited palm leaves. Usually there are no windows and only a low door, about three feet high, with old Mother Earth for a floor. In such dwellings all housekeeping is naturally primitive.

And the people themselves—the following pages tell much of them. Suffice at the beginning to say that they were half-naked savages, among whom polygamy and slavery were universal, their minds fettered by superstition and its ensuing fear. Among them war was the normal state of affairs, and cannibalism not uncommon. The spiritual problem was very obvious.

They had no written language when the missionaries first came among them, but, as indicated in the previous chapter, by the time Mr. and Mrs. Eldred arrived, a good deal had been done toward reducing the language to writing, collecting a vocabulary, and compiling a Grammar. Dr. and Mrs. Dye and Mr. Faris had gone at this with enthusiasm from the first, and their good example was followed by Dr. and Mrs. Layton.

As one would expect, the first work of these new missionaries was to learn that language, which the people called "Lonkundo." So, as soon as they were settled they gave much time to language study, under the direction of Mr. Faris and Dr. Layton.

IV

THE GREAT AWAKENING

MR. AND MRS. ELDRED reached Bolenge at a fortunate time, for they arrived in the midst of a spiritual awakening. This had come to pass in quite an unusual way.

To the years of patient seed-sowing by the American Baptists had been added the earnest preaching of Mr. Faris and Dr. Dye, and the winsome ministry of Mrs. Dye among the women. And while, at the time the station was taken over, there was no native church, three at least of those won by Mr. Banks had kept their faith strong and clear. These three Christians were a source of help and encouragement in the dark days of the beginning, and especially during the time that Dr. and Mrs. Layton were alone.

Two of these were Ikoko and his wife, Bokama. Ikoko had been trained as a carpenter, but was also an excellent preacher. Unfortunately by this time he had contracted the "Sleeping Sickness," but in spite of the ravages of that disease, he wrought much for the furtherance of the Gospel. Bokama was the first woman in Bolenge to clothe herself decently. Ikoko and his wife built the first house in the village with walls high enough for a doorway through which one might enter while standing erect. The dutiful husband of one wife and she a virtuous woman, Ikoko's spirit-filled life made a deep impression on Bolenge and the district round about. So

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eloquent did he become in his latter days that in after years the Christians were wont to compare him with Apollos. His fearless death and Bokama's self-control in the time of sorrow told on the multitudes who remembered how wicked Ikoko once had been, with a violent temper, and a user of vile language; and of how by the power of this Jesus teaching he had become gentle and good.

After Ikoko's death Dr. and Mrs. Layton felt that they were indeed alone, but they taught lovingly the Good News in the clinic, in the school, and in all their busy life. To this day the people of Bolenge remember gratefully the loving deeds of this consecrated couple.

But light was dawning from afar even in that dark land. And the human instrument of that dawning was a cripple named Josefa. His life story is brief and full of dark days. He was born of the Lokele tribe, far up the River, near to Stanley Falls, and while yet a boy was sold as a slave to the distant Bankundo. There he was seen by Mr. Banks, who redeemed him from slavery, and told him the story of the Redeemer who sets all free. The missionary thought the young man's experiences were not unlike those of Joseph, so gave him that name, changed slightly to fit the Lonkundo tongue.

Shortly after his conversion Josefa was terribly afflicted. In an article contributed to the *Missionary Review of the World,* in 1905, from which most of this information is taken, Dr. Layton describes his condition: "A terrible disease (not described in the books) attacked flesh and bone. Violently contracting muscles broke the diseased bones and the body was covered with boils and ulcers. He suffered excruciating pain. Bent and broken, his body is

beyond repair, and he remains as uncomely as a leper." But affliction only seemed to make his faith in Jesus brighter and stronger, and despite his disability he learned to read and write from the schoolboys with whom he lived. Not only that, but he supported himself, often holding his tools between his toes.

The first mention of Josefa appears to have been in a letter written by Dr. Layton under date of April twentieth, 1902. Some months before writing that letter he had discovered that every night a wonderful prayer-meeting was being held in front of Josefa's house. Each night a camp-fire would be built and one by one the people would gather about it. At first only a few boys would come, but gradually men and women, old and young, came to attend, until usually about seventy or eighty would be present. These meetings were very informal. One would tell what the missionary had said on Sunday; another would quote a passage of Scripture; still another would start a song, in which all joined heartily; prayers were crude, but many and earnest; then at the close of the meeting would come the climax—Josefa's teaching. He was far from eloquent, for he had never really learned the Lonkundo language, and his affliction had affected his tongue, so that he spoke any language only in mumblings. But the people had learned to understand him, and the spirit of his life spoke louder than his poor words. The meeting grew in power and in numbers until it became necessary to transfer it to the church, which was packed every night for months. Soon, other villages felt the influence of the Spirit of God and sent delegations to Bolenge, one of them consisting of over a hundred people.

Among those who became deeply interested in the Gospel about this time was a young man named Iso. He had attended the school conducted by Mr. Faris and Dr. and Mrs. Dye, and really knew quite a good deal of the teachings of Christ. He had, at this time, but one wife, named Bolumbu. But he was of the family of the chiefs and thought he would have to have a number of wives. So one morning he told Bolumbu that he was going that day to arrange for the purchase of several other wives. To his surprise she commenced to remonstrate, for she, too, had been listening to the Gospel. The young man was so enraged that a woman should talk thus to her husband that he beat Bolumbu brutally with a hippo-hide whip. Mrs. Layton saw the woman's condition, as she passed their house, and commenced to cry. Calling Bolumbu in, Mrs. Layton bathed the bruised and bleeding back and poured into her soul the balm of womanly consolation. Iso was struck by the tears and sympathy of Mrs. Layton and, after a desperate struggle, came late that very night to ask the way of salvation. He was literally "won by love."

The meetings in the church increased almost daily in interest. Each morning Dr. Layton spoke to them and each night the prayer meeting was held, at which Josefa and the missionary both usually taught the crowds which gathered.

One day in his message Dr. Layton spoke of the obligation of letting others know of the Good News. To his surprise he found that a group of interested ones, led by Iso, disappeared that afternoon and were gone for several days preaching in distant villages! At first he wondered what kind of a Gospel they had preached, but learned later that he had no need for anxiety.

Soon quite a few of those attending the meetings began to ask, "What shall we do to be saved?" Dr. Layton gave the Scriptural answer, and it was not long before they began to see "fruits meet for repentance." In July Josefa sent him a list of twenty people who wished to be baptized. As Messrs. Faris and Eldred were expected soon, Dr. Layton thought best to await their arrival.

So it came about that Mr. and Mrs. Eldred were present when the first converts were baptized in November and December of 1902, and when the Church of Christ at Bolenge was organized, March fifth of the following year, with twenty-four native members.

Mr. Faris and Dr. Layton were splendid preachers in the Lonkundo language, and, while Mr. Eldred was only commencing the study of the language, all three of them met often for counsel in those early days of the Bolenge church. They rightly felt that they were "master builders"—the Greek word means literally "architects"—and they desired above all else to be wise in laying foundations. They realized that mistakes made in those beginning days might mar the life and ideals of the church through long years to come. And those who have followed them in the work have reason to be grateful to those three men for the hours which they spent in prayerful council and the ideals which they held up before the infant church. As some of the native Christians had started to preach before they were baptized, it was not difficult to show them the New Testament ideal of every Christian being able to tell the Good News. Nor was giving difficult to teach them, for in their zeal they just wanted to give. So tithing was taught as an excellent way of giving, not only

of material things, but of evangelists to take the Gospel to those who have never heard. The church responded willingly to these teachings, and the Christians not only shared their joy with friends and neighbours, but decided to support a tenth of their number as evangelists. So three of those first twenty-four were sent out as the first evangelists. The missionaries had been studying the question of polygamy, but the Christians settled it quietly themselves. They saw that its spirit was opposed to Christianity.

Later Mr. and Mrs. Faris retired from the work and Dr. and Mrs. Layton were transferred to China. But whenever the church at home remembers the victory at Bolenge, it should not fail to give grateful appreciation to these wise "architects" of those early days. Nor will any adequate history of that awakening ever be complete without a large place for Josefa. He went home to Glory, February eighth, 1907, but his labours abide.

The return of Dr. and Mrs. Dye the next year from their furlough gave a great impetus to the spiritual forces awakened in this real revival.

VI

EARLY YEARS ON THE EQUATOR

WHILE these stirring events had been going on, Mr. Eldred had been busy in other ways. Much time was spent in the study of the language, but his energies were largely devoted to the Industrial work. His first letters deal largely with that feature.

Soon after his arrival he wrote home:

"My first work was to build a fence around the garden, which contains about two acres. The next was to build a temporary hospital forty-five feet by twenty. This is now nearly done. It is built much like the native houses. I have a sheep house, thirty by eighteen feet, well under way. The frame is up and the roof partly on. Doubtless both will be finished before this letter reaches you. In odd moments I made a wheelbarrow for the mission."

He writes also of taking every precaution against fever and of spending a large part of each day in the study of the language, under the guidance of Mr. Faris and Dr. Layton.

In December of 1902, Mr. Eldred made his first canoe voyage, a combination of evangelistic journey and hunting trip. This voyage was made in company with Dr. Layton and it extended down the Congo to the mouth of the Ubangi, its northern tributary, and a short distance up that river to a little village called Mpoka.

On this trip the young missionary experienced many of the features of Congo travel which were to bulk so large in his life in future days—equatorial storms, mosquitoes, tsetse flies, rough beds, swamps, and dangerous wild beasts. Once a herd of buffalo charged the hunters, who only escaped by climbing a huge ant hill.

Needless to say the Gospel was preached earnestly to the scanty population of that region.

The first annual report of Mr. and Mrs. Eldred, written in June, 1903, gives a glimpse into the many busy details of their life:

"It is not yet nine months since we came to Congo. Though for nearly four months Mrs. Eldred was frequently down with light fevers, her health has much improved, she having no fevers at all of late. My health has been exceptionally good. I have had but one light fever. Much time has been spent in the language, with the result that I now have a fair working knowledge of it.

"Having the building department for my special work it has been necessary for me to make several trips with the men into the forest jungles, and they were jungles of the first class. Often it is necessary for the men to actually cut a way through the densest kind of thicket before they can reach a desired point, or tree. This is not the exception, but the general rule. I have given attention to the different kinds of wood obtainable, and those suitable for building purposes in this land of white ants, borers, and other insects. In this matter of suitability I have judged not only from the effect of these insects upon different kinds of wood used here formerly, but have sought and received considerable information from missionaries of other societies, both up and down the river.

When we came here last October we found many buildings badly in need of repair. During this time a fence was built around the yard in front of Mr. Faris' house and around the two-acre garden; the new sheep house was completed; the sleepers and roofing material brought and part of the work done on the little house in which Mrs. Eldred and I are living. On February twenty-fourth I took full charge of the workmen. Since then our little house (which is to be our cook house and storeroom when our house is built) has been completed; Dr. Layton's house thoroughly repaired and a large workmen's house almost completed. Besides, we are now getting material for the new Cotner University Hospital. Dr. Layton's house was not a small job. The entire roof, a good bit of flooring, many of the sills and forty-eight of the fifty-six pillars under the house, had to be replaced by new. The pillars, to be proof against the white ants, have to be of a certain kind of wood; it is very hard, being about two specific gravity. These pillars are five feet long and about fifteen inches in diameter and were cut two and a half miles from here, being carried fully a half mile to the river, ten men to one pillar, and brought here in a canoe two at a time. Before they could be carried to the river a road had to be cut through the jungle the entire half mile. Owing to the difficulty of getting lumber made here, we have decided to build the hospital of brick. At the State Posts all the buildings are of brick, and on many of the mission stations brick is taking the place of boards.

"I have at present seventeen men and sixteen boys. Of the above mentioned workmen, four can now use a saw, plane, and other tools quite a little. I feel that there is a great work to be done in teaching the

native to use his own hands to better his own condition.

"Besides my work here on the station, which occupies all of my time during the week, I have gone with Dr. Layton on Sundays to visit several of the native towns. Though Dr. Layton did the preaching it offered me an excellent opportunity to study both the language and the people."

Because there were only two dwellings on the station at that time, it had been necessary for Mr. and Mrs. Eldred to live with one of the other families, so it was quite a satisfaction when a part of their own home was completed, and they moved into it in July of 1903. The next year another room was added to it.

A letter written in January of 1904, after Dr. Layton had gone home, tells how he usually spent a day at Bolenge:

"I am up and dressed at five A.M., at which time I blow the horn (a native horn made from an elephant's tusk) for work. All the men and boys come to the store and tool house, where we begin the day with devotions. Then they are given their tasks. After this I go to the house, have the medicines brought out (those which Dr. Layton gave me to use) and hold the daily clinic. Occasionally natives are given medicine at other times in the day, but it is not the rule. After this we have our breakfast, usually about eight o'clock. After breakfast I work until noon at some physical labour, or training those in the Industrial department. At noon the horn is blown again and if there is any work completed it is brought up and I receive it. The noon time is from twelve to two o'clock. At two o'clock work is resumed and sometimes I work all afternoon, but not

every day. I could not stand it all the time. Mrs. Eldred and I have our season of private worship just after dinner, after which we rest until two o'clock. Afternoons, when I am not at physical labour, I am busy on the language, reading, writing letters, or something of the kind. The call to quit work is at five-thirty P.M. The evenings here are very short, or, I should say, the twilight is short. Frequently we have songs in the evenings, and go to bed early, as is necessary for health in Congo."

In March of that year Mr. Eldred wrote of spending much of the time for some weeks in the forest with his men, getting out lumber. This was done with a pit-saw, as there are no saw-mills in that remote part of Africa. It is quite a simple process, though much skill is required to produce good boards. The proper kind and size of tree having been chosen, it is cut down, a pit about six feet deep is dug, and a section of the trunk is laid across this pit. A saw about six feet long, with handles at each end, furnishes the cutting power, while the motive power is furnished by two strong men, one above on the log, the other in the pit below, alternately pushing and pulling on the saw. This is a crude method, but fairly good lumber can be produced by skilful sawyers in this "human saw-mill." Sometimes, instead of digging a pit, the log is raised by means of a block and tackle, and held up above the ground by a sort of platform. But the sawing is done in just the same manner. This latter method came to be the favourite one of Mr. Eldred. While only two men could work a saw at one time, such labour is so tiring that four men are necessary to a saw crew. Mr. Eldred had to take raw savages from their forest villages and teach them this kind of skilled work.

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Yet he tells us that in a year one such crew got out twenty-three hundred feet of lumber.

His resourcefulness was often put to the test. Once he needed a rake and the nearest store was seven hundred miles away, with quite a probability that such a thing would not be in stock. So he took an old hoe, broken beyond repair, with some odd pieces of steel, and at the forge and anvil made them into a creditable rake. A cant-hook was badly needed for turning logs, so that had also to be made. Whenever tools were broken he repaired them.

Another thing already mentioned in his letters, which Mr. Eldred felt very necessary to do and to teach the natives, was the making of brick. So he writes of building a shed large enough to dry three thousand bricks at a time. Then a large number of wooden moulds were made by the men and boys to whom he was teaching carpentry, for all the bricks would have to be moulded by hand. At first the boys under his supervision mixed the clay with hands and feet, but he was not satisfied with the results. So he made a sort of pug-mill in which to grind the clay and mix it with water. This mill was a decided success; four boys could run it and do more and better work than twice as many boys could without it. This work was done by the schoolboys, who besides the time spent in studying were able to turn out about two thousand bricks per week.

The medical work also, as has been indicated, had fallen to his lot, for after the departure of Dr. Layton they were for four months without a medical missionary. This was quite a different sort of work from the others, for which his mechanical instinct and training had prepared him. But we have here an illustration of his many-sidedness, though his

own account of his medical work was a very modest one:

"Since Dr. Layton went home I have been doing the medical work. I have an average of about fifteen patients a day. Of course, I do not pretend, even to the natives, that I am doing what a doctor could do, yet I have cured many ulcers and sores, stopped several cases of dysentery, relieved quite a number of cases of pleurisy, pneumonia, and sore eyes."

In February of 1904 Dr. and Mrs. Dye returned from their furlough and the two families were together until the end of Mr. and Mrs. Eldred's first term of service.

Dr. Dye resumed his medical work energetically. Part of his furlough had been spent in special study at the London School of Tropical Medicine, and now much of his attention was given to combating the dreaded "Sleeping Sickness," the scourge of Central Africa. He and Mr. Eldred directed the evangelistic work, and gave much time to the oversight of the growing native church.

Mrs. Dye took charge of the day school and the work among the women, and soon a fine interest was manifested in both these departments.

The two families wrought in efficient enthusiasm, and the work went forward by leaps and bounds.

Two events occurred in the summer of 1904 which brought joy to the hearts of Mr. and Mrs. Eldred. The first was the birth, on June twenty-second, of a baby boy, who was given his father's name, Robert Ray, but to whom the natives gave the name of "Mpela." This afforded an illustration of a curious native custom. Soon after their arrival the natives had given to Mr. Eldred, on account of his prodigious strength, the name of "Lokofe," and to Mrs. Eldred

that of "Bolingo," but now they were no more to be called by those names, but by names of honour, on account of their son. Henceforth he was to be known as "Is'a Mpela" (Father of Mpela), and she "Myang'a Mpela" (Mother of Mpela).

The other event was the decision in July of the Christian churches in St. Joseph County, Indiana, to support Mr. Eldred as their Living Link. This was especially gratifying, as the leading church in that county was the First Church in South Bend, where they had both spent so many happy years of service, and within whose walls they had been wedded. Also it was a joy, because the leader in this movement was Mr. P. J. Rice, who had united them in marriage. Mr. Rice writes, "It was easy to make Mr. Eldred our Living Link for the churches of St. Joseph County, though the sum required was more than three times as much as the combined offerings of these churches, and it was easy, moreover, to continue raising this amount, for the people knew and loved our Living Link missionaries."

By this time Mr. Eldred was getting a good grasp of the language and preaching regularly. He did all the preaching and took charge of all the station work for a month while the others were absent.

Then in May of 1904 he wrote a description of his first real evangelistic trip, for it was in many ways his first taste of a service to which so much of the later years were to be devoted. He had made one trip something like it, but at that time he did not know the language. So this letter is very significant:

"I must tell you of a journey we made through the back country. Not having been off the station since October, 1902, we thought it good for Mrs. Eldred to have a little rest and change. So, on April

fifth, we started for the American Baptist Station at Ikoko, on Lake Mantumba. We went by the steamer of another mission. After staying for ten days I left Ikoko and came back to Bolenge overland. The first day was spent in going up a creek which empties into Lake Mantumba. It was through a region where the people do not speak our language. That night my men and I reached our own people. I preached to a good crowd. The next morning, after sending the canoe back to Ikoko, I spoke in two parts of the town. Before leaving the chief begged me to come and live with him and his people and teach them the words of God. He offered to build me a good house and furnish me with food if I would only stay. I was three days more in reaching Bolenge. Ten hours of the time were spent in wading swamps where the water is from a few inches to four feet deep. On this journey I passed through fifteen towns in which our language is spoken. One of the men who went with me is an evangelist. He and I spoke two or three times in each place. In another town the chief begged me to come and live with him and his people, that we might teach them the 'words of God.' In still another town, after I had preached a good while and had eaten supper, a crowd of boys came to me and asked me to tell them more about the teachings of Jesus. About this time there was a native dance started up not a hundred feet away and some one called the boys to come and join the sport. A few of them went, but there were eighteen who would not go; they stayed and heard me. I talked to them a long time. When the noise of the dance got too loud they sat closer together and nearer to me. They asked me questions and begged me to come and teach them more. Brethren of the home land, could you

but see the need of these people, could you but hear their cry for that which you have within your power to give, could you but know the transformation the Gospel has wrought, is working, and will work in the hearts and lives of these people, I am sure the treasury of the Lord would not lack."

Among his other interests Mr. Eldred took charge of a group of orphan boys. These friendless little fellows made a strong appeal to his big heart, and he spent much time with them. Two of them, Bompimbo and Baleno, were under his care for a number of years, and Bompimbo became quite an efficient evangelist.

From the first Mrs. Eldred helped in the school and in the work among the women, and gathered about her a group of orphan girls. These she not only cared for, but taught them sewing, fancy needlework, and housekeeping, as well as personal cleanliness, modesty, the care of children, and all the other graces and virtues of womanliness, striving through all her teaching to lead them to the Saviour. All this she did in addition to her own household duties, which are many in such a land, and which she wisely felt should come first.

It has come to be an axiom among Congo missionaries that one of the best ways to make the Gospel real to a primitive people is to build up a Christian home in their midst. The dwelling and every object in it are full of lessons, and the family and its ways of life are even more so, especially if there be a baby, like little Mpela in the Eldred home. Mrs. Eldred was obliged almost daily to take down her hair to show to an admiring group how it nearly reached the floor. And the baby—the people came from distant villages to see him.

In more ways than one dreams at first, the home comes to be a source of comfort and help to the missionary. Under Mrs. Eldred's magic touch their dwelling at Bolenge, simple though it was, came to be just as if a little bit of clean, wholesome United States had been lifted out of its place and put there in the midst of the filth and wretchedness of heathenism. Even when they lived in the tiny house mentioned by Mr. Eldred in his early letters, its two rooms were kept bright and cheerful, and when the departure of Mr. and Mrs. Faris gave them a bungalow which was large and fine for Congo, she had a better chance for making a real home. Few more delightful missionary dwellings were to be found on the Congo than theirs. Feeling as she did about the importance of this part of her missionary career it is not strange that in later years, when asked to describe her own work, she wrote simply, "My work has been the keeping of my home to be an example to the people who know not the meaning of the word 'Home,' and the care and training of orphan girls." One of those girls was in after years matron of the Girls' School.

During these busy days both Mr. and Mrs. Eldred were in quite good health though Mrs. Eldred had several fevers and he one or two.

In one of his letters written during this period, Mr. Eldred speaks of superintending the re-roofing of several of the Mission buildings with "ndele." This is a sort of thatch made in the form of plaited mats from the leaves of the palm called in Lonkundo, "*ndele.*" Speaking of this, he writes:

"This would not have been so difficult a piece of work if we could have ordered the material delivered to us ready for use, but instead my men had to go

seven miles to a swamp across the river, where it grows, and wade about in the swamp waist deep in water while gathering material, coming back at night of the second day. The material thus gathered has to be made into mats. These mats are tied on the roof with ties made from rattan gathered from the jungle. A man can gather and make an average of ten mats a day. The above-mentioned work required about two thousand mats."

These " ndele " mats are tied on like huge shingles and such a roof, well put on, will last from three to five years.

In his annual report written in June, 1904, Mr. Eldred mentions a man who had been under his tutelage during the year. This man, Is'ekae, knew nothing whatever of tools when he came, but at the end of his first year in the carpentry department, was able even to mark out work, and make simple furniture with some degree of accuracy. The mention of Is'ekae in this report should be noted, not only because his progress is a good example of what a native of that region may become under efficient instruction, but because Is'ekae was to have an outstanding part in the future of the Congo Mission. Some brief sketch of that part will be found later in this work. Suffice here to say that Mr. Eldred not only taught him carpentry, but won him for the carpenter's Son.

VI

TOILS AND SUCCESSES

AN English Missionary, Mr. Kendred Smith, visited Bolenge in 1905 and wrote his impressions to the Foreign Society. So many references does he make to the subject of our sketch that some portions of his letter are here given:

"Two months ago I arrived in England from the Congo, after a term of service at the Baptist Missionary Society Station at Popoto, on the Upper River, and spent a day at your mission station at Bolenge on my way home. It has occurred to me that you might welcome an account of my impressions of the Sunday spent with your missionaries on the equator.

"Bolenge Station, built on a good high bank, looks very picturesque as one stands on the deck of the Mission steamer, the 'Goodwill.' The grassy lawns, the beds of flowers, the houses and other station buildings peeping out amongst the palms and other indigenous trees, not only make an attractive picture, but also show that this is one of those too rare spots in Congoland where God's servants are trying to help the degraded natives and lead them sympathetically to God.

"To the right of the steamer beach huge boulders of conglomerate rock strew the strand, but happily there is a sufficient clear space for the steamer to anchor between these masses of rocks. A spring, welling up out of the beach and covered with a

brick well house with a palm-thatched roof (built by Mr. Eldred), supplies the station with an abundant supply of pure and clear water, so different to the wide coffee-coloured stream flowing constantly by and known to the world at large as the Congo River.

"At the top of the bank the ground is level and here one finds a well laid out station. A palm avenue skirts the Mission grounds, making a beautiful and pleasant walk, more especially as the stems of nearly all the palms make a perfect fernery of green.

"The school chapel, recently log-rolled by Mr. Eldred from its former site, now occupies a central position and can be easily approached from all sides. The orphans' house is being erected by Mr. Eldred toward the east of the station at a little distance from Dr. Dye's house, while the sheepfold and the carpenter's shop are found in convenient positions, the former toward the east and the latter toward the west of the station.

"A grove of sweet orange trees adds a fresh beauty to a fine station, while a well cultivated vegetable garden supplies the missionaries with the green food so conductive to health on the Congo.

"Mr. R. Ray Eldred is a man with a big heart, overflowing with sympathy, who, amongst his manifold building operations and general work, finds time to share in the spiritual work of the station and share in it with all the force of his tender and compassionate nature.

"The ringing of the station bell on Sunday morning told me that the day's duties had commenced. The people gathered, women to the left, men to the right of the speaker, while some married couples occupied the benches in front of the platform. What a congregation! Men and women from the village

in native costume, with hair braided and dressed in the peculiar fashion of the African natives, others dressed neatly and decently in garments made under the supervision of the lady missionaries, but all alike, seemingly anxious to worship quietly and reverently the God they had learned to honour, from the teaching of your missionaries. The Doxology was sung (of course in their own language) all standing. Prayer followed, these erstwhile savages closing their eyes and bowing their heads reverently before the All-Father. A portion of Luke's Gospel was read by Mr. Eldred and then followed a discourse punctuated by murmurs of assent by the whole congregation, who seemed intelligently to follow the address.

"Mr. Eldred had prepared a design on the blackboard to illustrate some of the points in the teaching, thus endeavouring to reach his audience by two avenues, the eye and the ear. After a hymn and prayer the general congregation was dismissed and the Communion Service held. The church numbers nearly a hundred members. On the Sunday I was present twenty-three were absent, some evangelizing in the interior, some absent through sickness or domestic reasons. The evangelists are sent out in pairs to the different posts and are entirely supported by the contributions of the native church. Collections are taken after each communion service and from three hundred to one thousand brass rods (the native currency) are collected each Lord's Day."

It is interesting to note that even in his college preaching Mr. Eldred had found drawings useful in bringing home the truth, and some of these were found among his sermon outlines of those days.

Chemical illustrations of his sermons are remembered in hundreds of African villages, and not only taught truth in vivid fashion, but helped a great deal in breaking the power of superstition and of the witch doctor.

As indicated in Mr. Smith's graphic picture, Mr. Eldred was now giving more and more of his time to distinctively religious work, and this also is brought out in the introduction to his third annual report, written in July, 1905:

"'Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith Jehovah of hosts.' Surely it has not been any superior knowledge or skill on our part, but only the Spirit of the Father above which has been working in and above all, that has enabled us to see such rich fruitage of the Gospel here in Bolenge during the last year. And we greatly rejoice that we have been counted worthy to partake in this most glorious of all work.

"Since the middle of July last I have had four of the church services each alternate week with Dr. Dye and find in this as in other forms of mission work great joy in being able to show the love of Christ to those among whom we live."

Yet this tireless man of industry had found time to accomplish much in the industrial part of the work. Several mission buildings were repaired; his own dwelling partly rebuilt and painted on the inside; a small native house erected in the woods, to serve as an isolation hospital for victims of the Sleeping Sickness; a fence built around the station garden and another around the entire station; the sawyers under his charge got out eighty-five hundred feet of lumber; a carpenter shop, twenty-eight by forty-two feet, was also built. It is not surprising

that he says, " The work in this department is more promising than at any time since I have known it."

But perhaps the most notable achievements of that year were the moving of two buildings. One of these was the small dwelling, which had been their temporary home. This was moved from the back to the front of the station, and placed solidly on brick pillars, high enough from the ground to be cool and free from pests. Then a veranda was built about it, shelves put up, and it was transformed into the " Cotner Memorial Dispensary." (It is small and insufficient, but to this day it is the only attempt at a medical building at Bolenge.)

The moving and fitting up of the new dispensary gave Dr. Dye better opportunities for his medical ministry, which was rapidly enlarging. Many came to be treated, and remained to listen to the teachings of Jesus.

The other building was the church, which was moved from the front of the station back nearer to the native village. This was a larger structure and required more skill in transportation. This moving of buildings, for which he had to make rope and capstan, occasioned many expressions of wonder on the part of the natives and was a surprise to many white people as well.

A letter written about this time to his Living-Link churches closed in this fashion:

" During the past year forty-one have been added to the church, and the present native membership is eighty-eight. The number of those who attend the meetings held for inquirers is large and they seem to be seeking the teachings of the Master in earnest. There are many questions that we have to deal with here that are unknown there and we are constantly

seeking wisdom from on High. You must pray that we may be guided in all the decisions of these things unto the glory of the Saviour who died to save these people. There is a vast difference between the life of the native Christians and those who care not for the teachings we bring. The Christian who formerly gave way to all of the heathen passions now not only refuses to do these things, but gives of his scanty supply to feed the poor, the sick, and to care for the dying. For example, the native church here is now caring for a boy who has no home and is sick with the fatal Sleeping Sickness. On the other hand, this came to our notice not long since. Some men in one of the near native towns were having a dance to which the women were forbidden, and while the dance was going on a poor sick woman, who knew not of the dance, came along the path, thus coming upon the men. Thereupon she was set upon by the men and very cruelly beaten; after which she was sent by her husband to a town some twenty miles inland to collect a debt. Not daring to refuse she went as best she could to the place, collected the debt, but was too sick to get away again. Now it is a custom among the natives that if a slave or other person belonging to another dies in your house you will have to pay for that slave or person. Thus to avoid having to pay for this poor slave wife, the one to whom she had been sent cruelly drove the sick woman out of her house and out of the town. Thus with no place to sleep except in the jungle and with no protection from the wild animals she tried to go home. Being, however, too weak to do so, she crawled as far as Bolenge and here some of our Christian women saw her and brought her to the station, but it was too late. She died in about a half hour. We

sent word to her owner and also to the one who had driven her out to die to come and bury her, but no one came as no one cared for a poor dead slave wife, so she was buried by our station boys. This is an example of the charity of the heathen and their love for their slaves. Often a sick person among the heathen is left to die of starvation because no one will take him food, drink, or fire.

"O, Brethren, could you but see the eager faces that we see as we unfold to them the message of love, could you but witness with your own eyes the transformed lives of those here who have chosen 'that better part,' I am sure you would be stirred deeply and would resolve to let no opportunity pass whereby you may help them in their great need. And in helping them you are yourselves built up and strengthened in every good word and work."

Soon after this Mr. and Mrs. Eldred heard of the writer's appointment as one of their colleagues and wrote him a delightful letter of welcome, under date of August fifteenth, 1905. This letter closed with the following words:

"It is a pleasure to know that you are from old Kentucky University, also to know that the missionary spirit is in the air there far more than when I was there.

"We are sure you will find the work here pleasant, once you get into it, and the language a growing delight, as your time lengthens in the Congo.

"The joy of telling those who have never heard before of the love of God and Christ, except as they have heard it from the native teachers, is very great. This you will see as we now daily see. Hungry, thirsty, weak, and ignorant souls come to you and your fellow workers for teaching and guidance; this

you will enjoy. It will help you to face the few privations here. And again we most heartily welcome you to this field of God's ripe harvest."

The fellowship thus begun, before Ray Eldred and the writer had even looked into one another's faces, continued unbroken to the end.

On August twenty-second the second Eldred son was born, to whom was given the name of Philip Ward.

Three weeks later, as the first term of three years was now completed and they were worn out from the effects of the climate, Mr. and Mrs. Eldred left on furlough.

VII

THE FIRST FURLOUGH

REALIZING that to go directly to the homeland would mean that they would land in bitter cold weather, and feeling the need of a knowledge of the French language, to make more pleasant the relations of the missionaries with the Belgian Colonial officials, Mr. and Mrs. Eldred decided to spend the winter in the south of France. Some pleasant months were spent in Marseilles. Strength was renewed and a substantial basis laid for speaking and writing French.

While there he wrote the following review of the Bolenge work:

"In this we shall attempt to view the field of labour to see where advances have been made, also where the weak points are, that they may be strengthened, if possible. Now at the close, better than at any time during our three years in Bolenge, Africa, we are able to see the changes that have taken place. Also, we would add that due credit must be given to the years of patient seed sowing, prior to the period of which we write.

"The medical work has increased, not only in the number of patients and the greater demands upon Dr. Dye, but also, and what is better, in the confidence which the natives generally have in the value of the medical missionary and his medicines.

"There has also been considerable material improvement on the station from time to time, such as

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new buildings and the repairing old ones. Where formerly the native worked for us simply for the pay he would get, now he is eager to learn how to work and often wants to be paid not in money, but in tools, such as saws, axes, hammers, planes, and chisels. One factor of missions here in Africa must ever be the industrial work.

"The church is in a most healthy condition. Where formerly there was no native church, now there is a most active, wide-awake, missionary church of over a hundred members. The hideous, and often indecent dance, where all attended, and in which all joined freely, has given place, in many cases, to quiet family firesides, from which rise daily songs of praise. Where formerly the way was blocked by that most formidable of all obstacles, native indifference, now the doors are wide open, and, not only so, but heart-rending appeals, which should not go unheeded, come to us from every side: 'White man, you are giving this good news to others, why will you not go with us to our village and teach us also? Why can you not send us teachers? Why do you leave us to die? Cifobwa! Cifobwa! We shall surely die. We shall surely die!' is still ringing in my ears.

"The weak point in the work on the Congo is in the fact that there are not enough workers to do the work. In this time when men desire to see the fruit of their labours and rich returns on capital invested, why not invest in stock on which the Lord has placed His highest approval? In this time when much is being attempted preparatory to the Centennial Convention in 1909, why should we not attempt greater things and carry the Gospel far beyond Bolenge, as preparatory to the great Judgment Day of the Eternal God? Every day of delay will be an

CARPENTERS AT BOLENGE

opportunity lost. While you in the homeland are enjoying the blessings of Christianity, thousands will die without a knowledge of the Love of God. Will you be one to go? Will you help to send others?"

In a message to his Living-Link churches, written also from France, he has this to say of the enthusiasm of the converts:

"This church, most of the members of which are poor, is ten times a Living-Link church. They keep ten of their own number in the mission field; some of them go a distance of seventy-five miles into the interior where the glad tidings have never been told. They are usually sent out for a period of ten weeks, then they come home to give their reports to the church, to take a short rest, and, also, to receive further instruction from the missionaries. Often when these evangelists come home some of the natives from the towns where they have been teaching come with them; some come to see if it is really true that people are giving up their old ways of living for the new way that is taught by the white man, while others come for further instruction, and many of them do not go home until they know just what the teaching is and have been buried with their Lord in baptism. Then how glad they are to return to their own towns to teach their friends and to tell the good news! From many of the interior towns they are calling for teachers. This is true not only in our region, but throughout all the Congo State where there are any missionaries to give out the Light many are giving up the old native life, with all its degradation, for that of the Christian. It is a great joy to us to be permitted to have a share in the work in such a needy part of the Master's vineyard."

The furlough was largely spent in journeys among the churches, showing with picture and story the victory of the Gospel among the Forest Children. In October of 1906 Mr. Eldred spoke at the National Convention of the Disciples at Buffalo, being heartily applauded when he set the goal before the Congo church of having a thousand members by the Centennial Convention in 1909, and stirring all hearts when he told them that when God called him home he would rather be buried beneath the palms of Africa than anywhere else. How little it was realized then that these words were almost a prophecy!

His report for that year covered but three months, and closed with these words:

"The last week at Bolenge was largely occupied in preparations for the home journey, during which time such expressions as these were constantly in our ears: 'White man, do not forget us;' 'Will you really come back?' 'Do not stay too long.' 'Tell those Christians in your country that we need more of God's teachers.' 'Be sure to bring other teachers with you when you come back to us.'

"It was with heavy hearts that we left Dr. and Mrs. Dye alone on the station and started for the homeland. Our prayer was then for more workers and the God of all, in whom we trust, and to whom we made this request, has answered our prayers even more fully than we thought. We are very happy to welcome the new workers to Bolenge and to a life of service spiced with trials and privations, yet seasoned with an abundant supply of happiness and joy that others do not and cannot know.

"The outlook for the future is most promising and we eagerly await the time for our return to

our chosen work and to those we have come to love."

They bought during furlough a little home in South Bend, moving there that fall. It was necessary to mortgage the property, yet they felt that in some sense it was a haven of refuge. In their struggle to buy a home out of their savings they did not forget the work to which their hearts were bound, but gave one hundred and fifty dollars on the Annuity Plan to help the work on the Congo.

Meantime dark days had come upon the Congo Mission. Three months after Dr. and Mrs. Dye were left alone at Bolenge, Mrs. Dye became seriously ill, and for months her life was despaired of. In that time of sorrow the native church showed its loyalty in no uncertain way, and grew in numbers and spiritual power.

While confined to her room Mrs. Dye had an unusual opportunity for language study, and, while helping some of the new workers in their study, made many grammar notes. Later, while she was on furlough, these formed the basis for a Grammar of the Lonkundo Language.

Mrs. Dye's illness brought about a crisis in the Mission, so Mr. Eldred volunteered to return before the end of his furlough. Therefore, on December eighteenth, the day after the birth of their third son, Joseph Paul, in the South Bend home, the husband and father left his dear ones and started on his second journey to the Congo.

VIII

IN HARNESS AGAIN

ON this journey Mr. Eldred was accompanied by two new workers, Misses Ella Campbell Ewing and Alice Josephine Ferrin, and as Dr. W. Charles Widdowson and the writer had joined the Mission in his absence, his heart was cheered, despite sorrowing longings for wife and babies, with the hope for larger and better days at Bolenge. The party arrived at Bolenge February 9, 1907, making the trip in the shortest time known up to that time—fifty-seven and a half days from New York. The writer met Mr. Eldred that day and was glad to know him face to face. As Miss Ferrin became Mrs. Hensey on May fifteenth, it may be imagined that he was likewise glad to welcome the other members of the party!

What a welcome the native Christians gave Mr. Eldred! The beach was packed with singing, shouting, happy people, glad to welcome back their teacher to their hearts and his work.

He was soon in the harness again, preaching in the church and the surrounding villages, going to the forest with his workmen, building, teaching, ever busy and cheerful. His knowledge of French helped to make even more pleasant the relations of the missionaries with the Belgian officials. His first letter home shows some of his tireless activity:

"In the seventeen months that I have been absent the membership has grown from one hundred to two

hundred and twenty. There seems to be an awakening to the teachings of the Gospel at all the outposts where we have evangelists. Many are interested enough to come to Bolenge, several days' journey, to hear more of the new teaching. I have now a class of seventy, who come to me daily for instruction in the Gospel. We are hoping that many of them may become Christians soon.

"A few days after my arrival I started on an evangelistic trip across and down the Congo to the two out-stations we have in that section. I was gone a week; three days were spent in travelling. We arrived at Mpombo on Thursday afternoon. We held services twice that day and the next morning. There are several Christians and some inquirers at that place. The evangelist, Bojilinganda, teaches school in addition to his work as a preacher. His wife works among the women. Before leaving we invited all the Christians to come down to Bonkombo, where we were to spend Sunday. Bomkombo is the oldest of the two out-stations in this section and much larger than Mpombo. There are twelve Christians at this point besides the evangelist and his wife and the school teacher. Nearly all the Christians at Mpombo came down and we had a communion service with twenty-five Christians present. The little church was full all the time and some could not get in. The church building and the home of the teacher were erected by the people with the aid of the evangelist. On Tuesday morning we started for Bolenge, stopping for a service at Mpombo on the way. I preached to audiences of from one to five hundred people all the way, but I think that among the best meetings I ever held was the one we had that night at Mpombo out of doors in the bright

moonlight. We met out of doors because there was no building in the village large enough to hold the people who came."

But sorrow broke in upon the happy circle and, after a short illness, Miss Ewing fell asleep in Jesus May seventeenth, leaving the service she had loved so well.

Her death was a deep sorrow to all the Bolenge staff, for this sweet young girl had made herself very much beloved during the few weeks given to her to serve there. Her death caused much grief, also, among the native Christians, for she had already won the hearts of the women and girls, among whom especially she was to labour.

Miss Ewing was born in Jacksonville, Illinois, February thirteenth, 1883, and was brought up in a real Christian home, where the Word of God was studied and missionary periodicals read. She taught when quite a young girl in a coloured industrial school in her home city, and became interested in Africa. She was educated at Eureka College, where Mr. Eldred had begun his education, graduating in the class of 1905. When the opportunity came for her to go to the Congo she was radiantly glad. Of a happy disposition, very practical in her training, and enthusiastic in her hopes and plans, her loss was a serious one.

Yet shall one think that her coming was in vain? Was her life

> "Like the snow falling into the river,
> A moment white, then melts forever?"

No! A thousand times No! Those few weeks of life with her heart white-hot with love will count through all eternity!

Mr. Eldred had from the first the Bussira River system upon his heart and in 1903, when he was left for the first time in charge of the church, encouraged them to send evangelists to that district. In an early letter he writes of this field:

"The activity of the church in the way of missions is very encouraging. It should put to shame many of the churches at home. Our field is very great. The native evangelists, ten in number, are working nobly, but if we do not soon have others here to share in the directing of the work we cannot hope for the increase to the church that we otherwise should have.

"However hard these native evangelists work and however loyal and true they are, they are not without their trials and temptations. For example, the last time they went out six of them went up the Bussira River. Two were left about fifty miles from here to visit the places where the evangelists had been before, while four went on up the river to carry the Gospel to those who had not yet heard it. These four stopped about forty miles up the river. They had not been there long before they had nearly all their things stolen. These consisted of trade goods and salt, with which we had provided them, and with which they were to buy their food during the time of their stay. Instead of getting mad and getting themselves into disgrace, they behaved themselves in such a way that part of the stolen goods were returned to them. Another thing worthy of mention is that when the two who were left alone down the river heard of the misfortune of the others, they immediately started and travelling night and day went up the river to divide their substance with those who had suffered loss.

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This is a thing that no heathen native would have done.

"This Bussira River is not the only opening we have for the Gospel, but it is the largest field. I heard the Commissaire of the District say that he had been up this river system for ninety hours on a steamer, and on all the river and its branches, some of which are navigable, there is not a single Protestant mission station. Also, word comes to us continually to the effect that the people do not want the teaching of the Catholics. They ask us to send them teachers. Is it true that no one can be found willing to go for the Gospel's sake where the base and shameless agents of greed have long committed their godless deeds? This cannot be, and we are daily praying that such persons may be found."

The Gospel was planted in the Bussira districts by the evangelists sent up there by Mr. Eldred in 1903, who found many receptive villages on the banks of the Ruki and Momboyo Rivers. In June of 1906, while Mr. Eldred was on furlough, Mr. Creighton and the writer made a canoe trip in that region, going as far as Mbala, on the Momboyo. In April of 1907, soon after Mr. Eldred's return, a site was chosen at Longa, just below the junction of the Great Bussira and Momboyo Rivers. Some young men from Longa were baptized at Bolenge in February, 1906, and the first converts were baptized at Longa in April, 1907.

In June of that year Mr. Eldred made his first trip up the Bussira as far as Longa, describing his journey in a short letter to *The Congo Christian:*

"On receiving word at Bolenge that the white Catholic priest was on the ground frightening the Christians, and especially the chief and leaders of

the village of Longa, eighty miles up the Bussira River, because they had openly asked us to locate there and also because they of their own free will had come to Coquilhatville, the capital of the district of the Equator and publicly stated to the Commissaire their desire to have us locate there, it was decided that a visit be made to Longa and if necessary take the matter to the State authorities.

"Early Monday morning the few good-byes were said, for there are but few of us, and the writer started up the river, arriving at Longa at noon Wednesday. All of the Christians were very glad to see us and especially the evangelist, Iso Timothée. We found that the priest had been there some time and had threatened the chief and others with chains and imprisonment by the State if they allowed the Protestants to locate there. However, the night before we arrived he heard we were coming and suddenly took his departure. This was very significant to the people and the non-Christians accused him of running away from the English white man. He replied not, but went. We held services that evening and the next morning, both services being attended by large and attentive crowds. Thursday forenoon we started inland and visited six villages, returning late Friday afternoon. That evening we held a good service and followed this with a communion service with the twenty-eight Christians at Longa. At midnight we started for Bolenge, where we arrived about five Saturday afternoon.

"Aside from the preaching done, this trip did much to quiet the unrest of the people and to strengthen the Christians. Our opportunities in this field are limited only by our faith and the effort we exert to overcome opposition."

While in the Bussira he made up his mind that his life should be given to that field. So, while he stayed at Bolenge more than a year longer, his heart was ever at Longa. His workmen were chosen and trained with a view to the opening of that new station.

In July Mrs. Dye's health made it necessary for Dr. and Mrs. Dye to leave on furlough. While at home they told far and wide the story of the victory the Lord had wrought at Bolenge, and of the needs of the field. From Coast to Coast the churches were stirred to larger support, and brighter days dawned for the African Mission.

Mr. Eldred brought back with him a printing press, of which the writer took charge. As there was no building suitable for a printing house, it was set up in one room of Mr. Eldred's house. In July and August the first Lonkundo Hymn Book was compiled and printed, Mr. Eldred taking a large part and deep interest in the work. He translated several hymns for this book, which became very popular in the church. One of these was a translation of the beautiful song, "Summer Land," and is given here that the reader may see a sample of the Lonkundo language, in which Ray Eldred preached for so many years:

1. O ndekana es'ene ya nkafwana l'ibwa
Ko ndekan'ibomi el'iso nk'ae,
Ko ndekana la nkange ko la mpisaji
El'es'em'ölöci na!

Chorus

Ese emö'ea'tuka na,
Ese emö nk'oço nye,
Ese em'ea fole fole,
O ese em'ölöci na!

2. O ndekana es'ene e'olemo njonona,
Ko ndekan'atute tofene nye,
Ko a tosija tuku tuku mamuka,
El'es'em'ölöci na!

3. O ndekana es'ene y'obe nsasöka
Ko ndekan'eköji endik'eum,
Ko ndekana bielo biotokwela,
El'es'em'ölöci na!

4. O ndekana es'ene ya njasi njajila,
Ko ndekan'enyökö bia Satana;
Ko atosija l'eefe la nkange O l'ibwa,
El'es'enk'ölöci na!

How he loved to lead the great congregations in singing the hymns that showed that into their hearts had come the joy of the redeemed!

How he loved to preach the Gospel in that rhythmic, limpid, Lonkundo tongue! How his face would shine and his voice vibrate with passion as he spoke to the newly won Christians of their obligations to those who had never heard of Jesus! This was a theme on which he spoke often and always with power. No wonder then that he had a large part in bringing to pass the passionate fervour with which the Congo Christians are carrying the Gospel to all the dark places of their own land.

IX

"IN JOURNEYINGS OFT"

AS there were three men on the station in 1907 and 1908—Dr. Widdowson and the writer, besides Mr. Eldred, it was possible to do more itinerating than had been possible before. It was becoming increasingly necessary, in order that the Gospel should be taken to the interior villages, and those up the river, for confirming the faith of the scattered disciples, and the oversight of the native evangelists. All three of the missionaries had a part in this work, but it appealed especially to Mr. Eldred's pioneer spirit, and he had longed to have the opportunity for such service. So it is not surprising that many of his letters describe such itinerations.

One of his longest journeys is described by him in the following pages:

"I have just returned from an evangelistic journey through the country lying south and east of Bolenge and back from the river.

"My caravan consisted of twelve men and large boys and one of our leading evangelists, Lonkoko. Seven of the twelve carriers were Christians. Each had, besides his very few personal effects, a portion of my necessary outfit; one, my folding camp bed, another my blankets and clothing, one boy the cooking utensils, others, salt to buy food for myself and men; others, food supplies, trade goods, and such necessary equipment.

"We left Bolenge in good spirits on the morning of March twenty-first and were gone just thirty days. I noted the directions and also estimated the distances of the villages from each other in order to verify and correct our map of this inland country. We travelled, as nearly as I could estimate, three hundred and sixty-five miles; eighty miles of this distance was swamp. The Congo government having ordered the native villages to work the paths through some of these "swamps" made one-half or more of this eighty miles a trifle more passable, though the native method of working these swamps is to fell trees as nearly in a line as possible and then to piece out the spaces with poles. These tree and pole roads vary from big trees to poles the size of one's wrist, and from six feet above to a foot under water. In fact some of the poles are floating on the water. Except for my boyhood's adventurous spirit and the skill then attained in walking the top of a crooked rail fence, I should have fared worse than I did. However, between the villages farther back there were very few of these improved highways, so the rest of the eighty miles we had to pass by wading in water and mud from ankle to more than waist deep. I estimated the widest single swamp we crossed to be two and one half, or three miles wide.

"Now, I fancy some one is ready to ask what good can come from all this discomfort and fatigue. To all who object I have no word of reply. I only hear the sweet yet commanding voice of the Redeemer saying, 'Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature.'

"I visited eighty-one villages, fifteen of which had never seen a missionary before. I held one hundred and twenty-four preaching services, besides

many smaller services held by different ones of my Christian men, nights, mornings, and whenever they found an opportunity to tell the good news to a few people. Hundreds were given medicine for various diseases and wounds and ulcers were treated, while many were turned away because we had neither the medicine nor the ability to relieve them.

"The need of these people for the Gospel is great indeed—greater than I can tell you. Their sin and vice are beyond your comprehension. Women, children and the aged, when sick, suffer unspeakable, unwriteable things because of ignorance, superstition, cruelty, and neglect. The delicate plants of love and altruism are scarcely visible in the dense jungle of selfishness, lust, and retaliation. In Efosolo, one of the Injolo villages, I found a woman pinned to a log. The log was as big as a man's head and ten feet long. The top end was the natural fork of the tree. The branches of this fork were cut long enough so as to go on each side of the neck and allow a heavy pin to be driven through these and yet pass behind the neck. The pin was driven so close to the neck as to allow very little movement of the head. This huge instrument of punishment was put on the woman, she being compelled to remain in a sitting posture all the time. It was so heavy that she could not possibly get up nor down. How long she had been in this place I do not know; of the uncleanliness of the place I cannot speak. The man gave as the reason for putting this yoke on his wife that she did not want to live with him and that if he took it off she would flee to the forest; that he had bought her and wanted to get something in return for his money. The woman would have died there if left to his cruelty and neglect, so, al-

though I had no authority as a State officer, I ordered him to take the tree from her neck. At first he refused, but when I threatened to send a letter to the State Post regarding the way he had done, he began to remove the yoke. He began by getting a great club and trying to drive out the pin that passed back of the neck, striking terrific blows, no thought being given to whether it hurt the woman or not. Being unable to drive the pin out, so securely had he driven it in, I ordered him to cut it out. This he did not want to do, as it would render the yoke useless after I had gone. This was just what I wanted and it was finally done.

"In these back villages one thing that drew our attention was the great number of children up to six or seven years old who had as yet no addition to nature's wardrobe. Another thing was the extremely early motherhood. In one place, for example, a girl of fourteen or fifteen was the mother of a child a year old. One of the Injolo villages got into a quarrel about a woman with one of the Bempaka villages. The point at stake was very small indeed, but the quarrel became so great that the Bempaka villagers seized the woman and took her to a swamp on their way home, and there killed her and left the body in the water. I heard of the matter. In fact, the other side came to me for redress and I sent them to the State. I had heard of so many things that I gave the matter little serious thought till I was going through this swamp a few days later and was horrified at the stench caused by this poor victim's body.

"Two weeks later and some seventy-five miles from this place, I heard of a man being killed and eaten by the people of another town. On investiga-

tion I was satisfied that it was all too true. In fact, when I visited this village I stopped to rest in one of the houses where several men were sitting. I spoke of the matter and although they all professed no knowledge of it, their actions belied their words; so I finally accused them of having done it or having personal knowledge of it and of having eaten some of the man's body, and asked them to show me the place where they committed the crime. At this those I accused fled to the jungle and I found from others that I had accused the very men who did the killing.

"In addition to the vice and barbarism of these people, the progress of the Gospel is rendered still more difficult by the Catholics who add their charms to those already used by the natives. In one village we were unable to hold a service on account of a wine-drinking going on all the time we were there. The women of the village had nearly all gone to their gardens or elsewhere for the time, so as to escape the curses and abuses of the men. I noticed several of the Catholics drinking along with the rest and asked them about it, and they frankly said they were not forbidden to drink and do several other things that we could not tolerate. Wherever the Catholics were, there we saw the dress of Mary. This is a piece of very coarse cloth about one and one-half inches wide and two inches long with a cross worked on it with common thread. This is sold to the natives, who buy it as a piece cut from the real dress of Mary and therefore of great spiritual value. It is worn about the neck the same as they wear their beads.

"One must not dismiss this subject without looking at the bright side of it, for in spite of all the opposition of the Catholics and all the degradation of

the people themselves, there is hope for the work in this back region."

He then writes at length of the fidelity of the converts, of the churches they were building, and of the progress toward civilization. Continuing, he says:

"The nearest village that I counted in the eighty-one that I visited is three hours' walk from here, and I estimate that the farthest one is not less than one hundred and twenty-five miles distant. In the most distant set of villages which I visited (the Ilanga villages) there is an excellent opportunity for an out-station, where a strong native evangelist will be placed and a school opened. There are fifty villages that could be evangelized from this as a basis. By going from this point three days' journey one comes to the Momboyo River, which is the southern branch of the Bussira River system, which empties into the Congo just a few miles above Bolenge. Thus by going up the Bussira to Longa, where we hope to get land from the State for a station, and working up the Momboyo from there, all of the country in this direction can be reached in a systematic way with the Gospel. This will take time and strength and men will be needed from home to help do it, but these should not be lacking. This is not a paradise nor is it the most deadly climate on earth. I went three hundred and sixty-five miles without a day's sickness, and I know not the good that was done. The seed was sown as far as possible, the native Christians of this back country were strengthened and the outlook for the future is very bright. Brethren, we must be up and doing while we have the ears and good will of these people, while in part of the villages their minds have not been poisoned by the nefarious teaching of the Catholics.

God is opening doors of opportunity to us now that may be closed to us later if we neglect them now. It is ours to march in sunrise and rain, ours to sleep in most uninviting places, ours to preach to crowds the very stench of whose filthy bodies is repulsive, ours to do our utmost in relieving their sicknesses, ours to sow with a most liberal hand the seed of the simply story of Christ and His love for us. We can leave the results with Him who sleepeth not night nor day, assured that His word will not return to Him without having accomplished at least some good."

Mr. Eldred felt that the best way to enlist interest in the evangelization of Congoland was to let people see vividly the difficulties in the way of that accomplishment. He once wrote, "If you could but know the many, many difficulties that it is necessary—not expedient merely—but absolutely necessary to overcome, in order to plant the good seed of the Kingdom in this Upper Congo region, you might be more interested."

His annual report for that year noted that in the four months since his return to the field he had spent some seven weeks in itineration. Over seven hundred miles had been travelled, three hundred of them in canoe, while ninety-four villages had been visited.

Ray Eldred had always found keen pleasure in hunting and, in the summer of 1907, being on an evangelistic trip at Bonkombo, across the river from Bolenge, he decided to have a buffalo hunt and obtained some meat for the paddlers. Taking his rifle he stalked a herd of wild buffalo and shot and wounded a young bull. The animal tried to find out from whence the hurt had come, but did not see Mr. Eldred, as he had used smokeless powder and was

hidden. So the buffalo dashed away into the forest, with Mr. Eldred in close pursuit, tracking the wounded animal by the blood. As the chase went on in the jungle the infuriated animal turned suddenly on his pursuer, and, charging from behind the roots of a fallen tree, came upon him so suddenly that there was no time to shoot, so he leaped aside. But his feet became entangled in the thick underbrush and he fell, his rifle beneath him, and could not get up before the buffalo, having rushed past him, returned to charge. So the best he could do was to try to aim his gun out from beneath him and quickly pull the trigger, only to find he had forgotten to throw off the safety catch. He was lying on his back in the brush with his feet toward the animal and in such a position that he seemed unable to get his rifle ready to shoot. But he had taken off his shoes and was walking in his stocking feet to avoid noise in stalking, so, as the buffalo rushed at him with lowered head, he just put his feet over its eyes, when it stopped. This was possible because the buffalo's horns turn back and it is next to impossible for him to gore one lying on the ground. Several times the maddened animal returned to the charge, once succeeding in tearing the toe of Mr. Eldred's stocking with his horn, but was stopped each time by the feet over the eyes. Mystified by this, the buffalo wheeled and rushed away into the forest, where he was found dead some days later.

In November of 1907 Mr. Eldred made his first trip up the Momboyo River. He only got as far as the Belgian post at Mbala, but the village of Lotumbe, about twelve miles above, was chosen as a strategic centre, and the splendid evangelist Is'olumbu located there.

X

CONGO FOODS

SOME time during this term the following article on the subject at the head of this chapter was written:

"The food of the people on the Upper Congo differs so radically from that generally used in the temperate climates that it will be necessary to describe some used in this tropical clime. Beginning with breadstuffs, they have no wheat nor oats and, in fact, do not know these cereals. Rice is grown in the region of the far Upper Congo, but it is not cultivated nearer than about five hundred miles from here. We sometimes get small quantities of this rice for ourselves and for use in the hospitals, but the natives do not have it. They have an inferior grade of Indian corn and in going on a journey through the country one may see small patches of it growing at almost any time of the year, though this is by no means their staff of life. A food much more grown and used is the plantain. This is a large plant very closely resembling the banana, though larger and taller, and differs from the banana in that the fruit is not good when eaten raw. The green fruit is boiled and then pounded, but if the ripe fruit is desired it is simply roasted. Ripe plantains fried make an excellent dish and are much used by the white people in this way. The chief article, however, of their starchy foods, is the root of the manioc or cassava plant. Contrary to what one

would suppose, the natives do not prefer the sweet manioc, but rather the bitter or poisonous species of the plant, the roots of which if eaten raw or if taken from the ground and cooked without first having been soaked in water would poison the eater. This poisonous element is removed from the roots by soaking in water not less than four days, after which it is perfectly harmless and makes the chief item of their diet, being made into a sort of sour dough bread. It is a West Indian plant and is supposed to have been introduced into Africa by Portuguese or other early traders. Our tapioca is made from this root.

"*Vegetables.*—As to vegetables they have nothing in addition to the cassava plant mentioned above, except such as would come under the head of greens. For these they use the leaves of the cassava plant while they are yet small and tender, and they make a very good dish indeed. There are several other plants, mostly wild, the leaves of which are used by the natives for greens. These are made more palatable, according to the native idea, by being seasoned with large quantities of red and green peppers. These hot peppers grow both wild and under cultivation and are used in large quantities by the natives in many of their foods.

"*Fruits.*—The natives originally had no cultivated fruits, though there are a few wild fruits to be found in the forests here and there. Under this head, however, would be classed the palm nut. The cassava plant, the palm nut and the oil obtained therefrom make up the larger part of their diet. Other foods are cooked in the juice or oil of the palm nut. These nuts are also eaten roasted and boiled, or, sometimes, in cases of great hunger when

fire is not obtainable, eaten raw. The oil is gotten from the palm nut in different ways according to the custom of the locality. Usually, the nuts are boiled for a time, then the oil is pressed out by squeezing in the hands, though sometimes a very rude sort of press is used. Again, after boiling, the nuts are placed on a steep incline and a fire built underneath to keep the materials hot, so the oil will run into a trough at the bottom and thence into a dish of some kind. I have also seen this method used: The nuts, after being boiled, are put into a small canoe, or, if no canoe small enough is to be had, a trough made for that purpose; then this canoe or trough is filled about two-thirds full of water, after which the women makers of oil (the men never make palm oil) get into the trough and tramp the nuts over and over again with their feet, till the oil floats to the top, after which they carefully wipe off all the oil that may adhere to their feet and legs and put it in with the rest! Then they skim off this oil, boil and strain it, and put it aside in pots to settle and cool.

"*Meats.*—To some people the part that meat contributes to the diet of the native of Central Africa is surprising, because of the sources from which this article is obtained, while to others it is strange because of the limited amount of it. But let me make the statement in the beginning that with the raw native of the Upper Congo nothing in the line of flesh or that bearing any likeness to it is allowed to escape the palate of the hungry possessors thereof. All the wild meats of the tropics are devoid of fat, with few exceptions. Chief among these exceptions is the hippopotamus and some kinds of monkeys. As stated above the natives eat everything

that has a resemblance to meat. It is seldom, however, that they kill the larger game, such as the hippopotamus, the elephant, or the buffalo. And the white man who shoots these larger animals for his native workmen is considered to have very good qualifications. There are several kinds of antelope, and perhaps this animal is killed in larger numbers than any other. The method of hunting the antelope is as follows: Whenever a certain village goes on this hunt, first the field is chosen and then every family of the village desiring to share in the results of the hunt produces a net. This net is much like the gill net. It is about six feet high and varies in length from fifty feet to two hundred feet. The mesh of these nets is usually about three inches. These nets are joined end to end and stretched through the forest along an almost invisible path; visible only by a twig or vine being cut here and there to allow the net to be stretched. This long net is sometimes extended for three-fourths of a mile. Then after the nets have been stretched, with a native in ambush for every section, the villagers surround a large section of the country and drive the game, if there chance to be any, toward the nets. This driving is carried on much the same as it is done on fox hunts in Illinois. As the line of drivers closes in the men stationed behind the nets are alert, especially if the game has been sighted, ready to spear the animal that may become entangled in the net. In case the pursued animal is a wild boar or a leopard it usually breaks the net and gets away, but the antelope, except the very largest kinds, are thus caught, sometimes alive, and then comes the seemingly endless palaver of dividing the meat amongst the villagers. Different ones receive more or less

according to their standing in the village, or according to the number of nets or men the family had in the chase. Besides the antelope the natives sometimes get a species of hyena, or a water antelope; or a wild boar may be obtained by digging a pit which is covered over skilfully and into which the animal falls. Monkeys are a choice dish with them. Fish are abundant in the rivers, but are not caught in alarming numbers, because of the crude methods used by the people. The python also is caught, sometimes, and is considered choice meat. The dish, however, that might be liable to test the appetites of my readers consists of roasted caterpillars. There are several kinds of these worms eaten by the natives and by them are thought to be a choice dish—I have always taken their word for it.

"If any of my readers are troubled with appetites hard to please I think we could obtain a variety large enough on the Congo to satisfy even the most fastidious!"

XI

A TYPICAL CONGO JOURNEY

IN April of 1908, Dr. and Mrs. L. F. Jaggard, who had been chosen to be Mr. Eldred's colleagues in the opening of the new station at Longa, reached Bolenge. A week after their arrival, Mr. Eldred and Dr. Jaggard started on a journey into the interior. It was very necessary that the Bolenge outposts be visited, and a visit to Longa seemed imperative, so they planned to go overland to Longa, visiting the out-stations on the way.

Each day services were held in several of the smaller villages, and each night they slept in one of the larger villages, holding great night services. These night services were especially interesting and instructive, for the missionaries took with them a stereopticon lantern given to the Mission by Miss Ella Ewing. It was not much of a stereopticon compared with the magnificent electric ones so common in America, for its illuminant was only common kerosene, and it threw quite ordinary pictures, but the reader may readily understand that those primitive folk had never seen anything like it before, only a few even of the evangelists having ever seen any stereopticon pictures. And the coloured slides of the Life of Christ were really excellent, so the Christians had the Gospel story made plainer to them than ever before. As for the savages, their wonder at the pictures was unmeasured. Some of the old men told the evangelist located in their village that the

day after they saw the "Yesu" (Jesus) pictures their strength went from their bodies! And in many of those interior villages that first sight of those stereopticon pictures remains the one marvellous thing in their experience.

In an article describing this trip, Mr. Eldred tells of their impressions of African Catholicism:

"In this back country, following our evangelists —seldom do they go to a village first—come the teachers of Romanism. Everywhere the servants of the priests go they scatter small brass medals. These medals are given to the people and they are taught that these trinkets sprang from the head of Jesus when He was buried. Also, in other parts, we found they had been taught that these medals were thrown to earth by Mary after her resurrection, and that afterwards Mary visited Rome and commanded that these medals should be sent into all the world! The resurrection of Christ and His consequent mediatorship seem not to be taught. After one has been a wearer of the medal well enough and long enough, he is permitted to buy a crucifix and a string of beads. One instance was brought to our notice where a man thought he had worn his small medal about long enough and wanted to be promoted a step higher, so he could wear a cross and beads. Accordingly, he went to the father (priest) and made his request, only to be told that he was not yet good enough to be allowed a cross and beads. Undaunted by this reply, he told the priest that he would not wait longer and that if they would not give him his cross and beads he would go to the Engelisi (Protestants) at Bolenge, whereupon he received his cross and beads forthwith. One of the chief native Catholic teachers made use of a small sun-glass to light his

pipe of tobacco and taught these superstitious people in many parts that the fire came from heaven and was God's sanction on his teaching, and was also God's disapproval of our message! Consequently, I, having heard of this teaching, took my large sun-glass with us. We built fires with it many times and explained to the natives that it was simply a glass that the white men knew how to make so as to gather the sun's rays to a point in order to make heat, which when brought in contact with fuel, caused the fire which they saw. And again the people said, 'Another of the lies of the Catholics is found out.'

"Part of the way on this journey we had the company of from one to five of Catholic catechists, who sought to do us and the cause of Christ all the harm possible. We were cursed by them with as many and as vile curses as they could command, and for telling the people that the small brass medals were nothing but brass and were forged by the white men of Europe, our services were interrupted and broken up by those of the 'baser sort,' led on by the head Catholic teacher. Our lives were threatened, but we did not run, but did our best to scatter some seeds of the Kingdom, for we knew that the light of God's Word is the great need of all these people."

Mr. Eldred wrote in vivid fashion of the things which came within their notice on this typical journey, but an incident occurred which he did not mention in his letters. This was the rescue from slavery of a man named Bafutaminge. He was of the Ngömbe tribe and with two others of his village had been drafted to serve the Government as a soldier. Not caring for this sort of service they deserted and ran away into the forest, where his

two companions were killed and eaten by the savage people, and Bafutaminge taken as a slave and treated with much cruelty. When Mr. Eldred preached in the town where he was held as slave, while Bafutaminge could understand very little of the Lonkundo tongue, the kind face of the missionary spoke hope to his heart and that night he came stealthily to the house in which Mr. Eldred was sleeping and begged the teacher of Jesus to take him with him and to save him from his horrible slavery. No one who ever knew Ray Eldred would doubt his response to such an appeal, so next morning, after a wrangle with his master, the missionary took Bafutaminge away with him. But the master had a relative who was a Catholic catechist and hurried ahead to tell him. This false teacher hated the teacher of truth and was glad to take up his relative's cause. Gathering together a band of his followers he tried to prevent Bafutaminge from going away to freedom. This aroused the ire of Mr. Eldred's porters, many of whom were not Christians and knew nothing of non-resistance. The Romish teacher, taking advantage of Mr. Eldred's trying to hold in check his own men and prevent bloodshed, struck Mr. Eldred a number of brutal blows on the head and shoulders with a huge club, trying especially to crush the white man's sun helmet, so that he would be injured by the sun's rays. But courage and patience and resourcefulness brought all safely through, though the hardest thing to do was to prevent Bafutaminge from returning to kill the teacher who had dared to strike his deliverer.

It is interesting to note that Bafutaminge not only became devotedly attached to Mr. Eldred, but that Mr. Eldred led him to Christ. Also in later years

Bafutaminge helped to protect two white men of the Mission who were in serious danger.

Dr. Jaggard of course did not know the language at all, but he had with him a medicine case and a few instruments, and a clinic was held in each village. Hundreds came to be relieved, though the young physician felt that little could really be done for them, so brief were the stops. This trip was a rigorous introduction to Congo missionary life, for it required twenty-five days and the overland part of the journey was estimated to be two hundred and sixty miles, much of which was through swamps. However, it was not exactly the Doctor's "baptism of fire," as the following incident shows:

In going overland from Bolenge to Longa it is necessary to cross the Boloko River. As that river is a tiny one, not averaging much over a hundred feet in width, crossing it would be a small matter, if it did not have a swamp about a mile wide on either side. The people of the Isaka villages, who live on the Bolenge side of this swampy river, have a monopoly of the ferry business, for they own the only canoes suitable for the crossing.

Messrs. Eldred and Jaggard, after paying the amount demanded for the hire of a few small canoes, had to wade a mile in the swamp until the river was reached, for the Isaka people keep their canoes hidden by sinking them in the swamp near the river. Then the party had to embark in the canoes, go upstream about three miles and land on the other side. So small were the canoes that four trips had to be made, and four times one of them tipped over, blankets, camp-beds, clothing, stereopticon, and the doctor's medicine case getting wet, and a bushel of salt, worth in that interior about twelve dollars,

melted in its turbid waters. At last all the natives had crossed, so the two missionaries embarked in the largest of the canoes, about the size of a watering trough. Many trees had fallen into the channel, so first they would go over one tree and then under the next, and after that the canoe would go under a log while the missionaries climbed over. Vines overhead and the swift current made navigation far from easy, but all went well, until they were near to the landing place, when Mr. Eldred became entangled in a vine. Trying to extricate himself he rocked the canoe too much and they found themselves in the river! Fortunately both could swim, and it happened that at that place the water was not over their heads. It took the whole day for the crossing, and it rained from morning till night.

After a hot supper and some medicine as a preventive, they crawled into their beds, having to sleep in wet clothing under wet blankets, a dangerous thing to do. Nevertheless, after the experiences of the day, they were "thankful that we had the blankets to roll up in, and above all for the Father's protection which had been over us and our carriers during the day."

XII

ANOTHER BOUNTIFUL YEAR

IN July of 1908 Mr. Eldred made a digest of the annual report for that year to be published in the *Congo Christian,* under the above caption:

"In submitting the report of the church at Bolenge for this year we wish to give all the praise to Him by whose power and abundant blessings we have been able to labour with Him in accomplishing so much here.

"The work throughout has been prospered more than during any previous year. The farther solidifying and systematizing of the work spread over a territory fifty miles long and one hundred miles wide; the extending of the borders of this territory to one hundred and fifty miles long; the increased number of evangelists out all during the year; the heroic self-possession and courage of some of these; the continued high standard of giving of the church; the number of baptisms, a far greater percentage of these distant from Bolenge as compared with former years; the unprecedented itineration by your missionaries; the increase in the school; the large woman's work; the extensive medical work; besides the necessary repairing and some building; these have characterized this year's progress.

"During the year twelve itinerating journeys have been made, no one of which has been under eighty miles in length. Two of them were three hundred and fifty miles long and three others were over two hundred and fifty miles in length. In all, one

hundred and ninety-three days were devoted to itinerating and eighty-seven villages were visited. More than half of these were visited three times, and many five and six times during the year.

"At the last outgoing of the evangelists the church was able to furnish forty-eight evangelists, and four weeks later four special ones were sent to a field two hundred and fifty miles up the Bussira River, making in all fifty-two sent out from Bolenge. Of these, friends at home support six, and the native church forty-six. The giving of this church is a credit to itself and casts shame on many of the far better favoured ones of the homeland. Last fiscal year it was estimated that the native church gave fifty thousand brass rods. This year, by accurate count, the church has given * sixty thousand nine hundred and fifty-five brass rods to spread the 'Good Tidings,' that their fellows may also be redeemed.

"Bojilanganda is one of the examples of the redeeming power of the Gospel. Some nine months ago it became evident that he had the symptoms of the fatal 'Sleeping Sickness.' He came to us about it and we told him the plain truth. Undaunted by this he returned to his outpost for two terms of service, and gave up only when we refused to let him go again. The last stages of his case were rapid and he soon fell asleep to waken on the Resurrection morn, but before he died he willed his all to the church. His wife sold his few possessions and placed the proceeds on the altar of their God.

"This year the sowing of the Gospel seed has been abundantly blessed. There have been two hundred and twelve baptisms and there is now a live membership of four hundred and fifty-one. The number

* This is about $609.55.

of baptisms does not mean so much, perhaps, as to know that these represented fifty-four villages scattered far and wide.

"A crying need here at present and one that is destined to become more so every year is a school for evangelists. We now have over fifty evangelists, every one of whom should have the advantages that such a school would afford. Do not think that we have not taught them or that they are ignorant of the Gospel or its fundamental truths. On the contrary they have done exceedingly well considering the time that it has been possible to devote to them. Yet the cold fact remains that this part of Bolenge's usefulness will never be what it should be until this department of the work is developed. But to do this we *must* have a man set apart for that work. We can teach in the shade of the palms. We are doing so every day and *shall continue* to do so until such time as adequate buildings can be erected, but *we cannot teach without teachers, we cannot preach without preachers!*

"For myself, besides dividing the church services, the shepherding of the church, and the teaching of the evangelists equally with Mr. Hensey, I have been able to go on six itinerating journeys. These occupied forty-seven days and covered over twelve hundred miles. Also I built one three-room and one ten-room house for workmen, two large temporary sheds for the making and drying of brick; a permanent brick kiln; made forty thousand brick; replaced the old wooden pillars under our house with new brick ones; got out about twenty-five thousand feet of lumber; and built the new brick station store. We have been blessed with good health, and the outlook for the coming year is very encouraging."

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XIII

A STIRRING VISIT TO LOTUMBE

IN August of 1907 Mr. Eldred had a very severe fever, and, as he had been having a good many, the two physicians decided that he ought to go away for a rest. He had made up his mind to go down river on one of the Mission steamers for a month's change when circumstances changed his plans.

Is'olumbu, the faithful evangelist who had been in charge of the work at Lotumbe, came home unexpectedly, about the first of September, to report serious trouble there. He brought also a letter from the Congo State official at Mbala.

The work in the Lotumbe district had been really begun when Is'ekae, won and trained by Mr. Eldred in his first term of service, had returned to his home in June of 1906. Then Is'olumbu, as already noted in these pages, was placed there in 1907. After being there a few months Is'olumbu returned to Bolenge for the Christmas reunion, taking with him two chiefs of the Lotumbe district. These two were so impressed that they asked for a white man to come and dwell among them. This was impossible at that time, but five other native teachers were sent with Is'olumbu. But when they reached Lotumbe again, they found, as often it has occurred, that a Roman catechist had arrived in their absence. This false teacher had not only sowed tares amid

the wheat, but had striven to steal away the people's hearts by giving out bright medals and presents. And of course he had not failed to try to poison their minds against the Bolenge teachers. All this spelled trouble, and trouble there was.

The Catholic teacher had his followers build a small house for a church, as the people of Lotumbe had already done for Is'olumbu. The contest was one of words for some six months and they were warm words, you may believe. During this time the people of Lotumbe and vicinity had been weighing the rival teaching in their minds, judging each by its fruits. It seemed that some time before Efoloko came home Elongembalaka, the paramount chief of the district, had called the chiefs of Lotumbe and neighbouring villages to a secret council. At this the relative merits of the two teachings were discussed. Is'olumbu's quiet, modest behaviour was put over against the smoking, drinking, arrogant ways of the Catholic catechist, and the chiefs decided unanimously in favour of the Protestant teaching.

Then the chiefs, led by Elongembalaka, came and told Is'olumbu and his Catholic rival their decision and asked the latter to go away. All of which meant more trouble. Then the chiefs told the Catholic man that if he did not go away they would tear down his church and throw it into the river. He persisted in staying, so they started to carry out their threat. Is'olumbu told them that was not the right thing to do and did his best to restrain them, but in vain. The house was torn down. Naturally that spelled more trouble. The Catholic crowd went to another village, obtained help, and tore down Is'olumbu's church. As Is'olumbu had sincerely tried to prevent the destruction of their building, he naturally felt

indignant, and went to Mbala to complain to the State officer there, only to find that he had already been accused of having instigated the chiefs to tear down the Catholic house!

The official at Mbala did not feel like deciding such a case, so wrote letters to Mr. Eldred and the Catholic priest.

As soon as this word came it was evident that Mr. Eldred would have to give up his rest and go to Lotumbe, as at that time he was the only one of the missionaries who spoke French. Accordingly he and Dr. Widdowson left for there on September eighth. Three days' paddling brought them to Longa, and three more to Lotumbe, for Lotumbe is about one hundred and fifty miles from Bolenge. They found that the Catholic priest had gone up by State steamer and reached Mbala first. Passing this place by moonlight and having to keep close to the bank on account of the swift current, they were assailed by a volley of stones thrown by native Catholics in ambush. One of the missiles was aimed directly for Mr. Eldred's head, and it was only the swinging into range of one of the paddlers that saved the white man from being hit in the face. The native paddler received an ugly bruise on the neck.

They arrived at Lotumbe Sunday morning, and their welcome was an ovation. After preaching to the Lotumbe people, they walked to the first interior village, about half a mile away. Before their coming, Is'olumbu had told the people that when his white men came they would go about unarmed, instead of being defended by soldiers, or heavy rifles, as were the State officers and the priests. Mr. Eldred writes of that first little visit back from Lotumbe:

"Everywhere throngs of people came out to see us, and many times that day we heard the cries of runners who went ahead of us spreading the news of our coming, and we could not help but think of those wonderful days of the First Century, for the cries were, 'Come and see the gods who have come to visit us.' 'The gods of Efoloko have come.' In vain did we try to stop these cries."

The people had not believed Is'olumbu when he told them his white men would go about without soldiers or guns for protection. Now when they saw it was true, that fact also added to their wonder and their awe of the white teachers.

Several meetings were held that afternoon and camp was reached again just at sunset. The missionaries were tired and hungry, but the people crowded around eager to learn more of the "Baoi ba Nzakomba," the "Words of God." So the paddlers stretched the sheet between two trees and the first stereopticon picture was thrown upon it. A great shout of astonishment went up from the crowd, while many of the more timid fled to their houses. But when they realized that the pictures were of the Jesus of whom Is'olumbu had taught them, they all crouched in the dim moonlight and listened attentively, charmed by His beauty in picture and in life.

On Monday all the chiefs of the district went with Mr. Eldred to Mbala, and told the State officer that they wished only the Protestant teacher and teaching in their villages. The officer told them that they could have the kind they preferred. But on their way to Mbala they had passed the priest on his way to Lotumbe, so it was clear that the matter was not yet settled.

Again the Gospel was preached that night, and more pictures shown. As the people were reluctant to go to their homes, two of the evangelists spoke. Then Dr. Widdowson and Mr. Eldred preached, paying especial attention to the false claims of Romanism. They learned after the meeting finally closed that the priest was in hiding near by, listening to the sermons. Mr. Eldred remarks in one of his letters: "We hope it did him good."

The white officer from Mbala came the next day at the request of the priest. The latter insisted that since he had a few people in Lotumbe he ought to have a teacher there to care for them. His whole argument was for religious freedom! Mr. Eldred assented to the priest's plea, for religious liberty was almost a passion with him. But when the State officer put this view of the case before the native chiefs and elders, they were wild with anger. The officer threatened them with arrest and the chain-gang, but they would not listen. Old Elongembalaka told both officer and priest that if the Catholics ever attempted to build another house there they would throw it in the river. And when the officers went back to Mbala, it required all Mr. Eldred's influence to prevent the people from using the priest roughly. The latter seemed to think discretion the better policy, and went also to Mbala. The rest of the account is given in Mr. Eldred's own words:

"We stayed some days longer and made a journey into the country back from the river and found that in all of the villages we visited our evangelists have been doing faithful work and that the field is very promising for an early harvest.

"On Thursday of that week we accepted the invitation of the State officer at Mbala to take dinner

with him, so gathering many of the people that forenoon we held a last service with them and with many urgent requests to come back soon we started down river. At the State Post we found that our enemy, the priest, was trying to outwit us, for we found that he, knowing that this was the time for all of our evangelists to gather at Bolenge for conference and teaching, had planned to destroy all our work during the absence of the evangelists. We found that he had left a catechist at Mbala, who was to go to Lotumbe as soon as we left there, while he himself had gone across country on a four days' journey overland, to come out at Lokumo and Monieka, on the Great Bussira, where we have a fast growing and very encouraging work. In this, however, he was doomed to disappointment. For when we sent a large canoe up to Lokumo to get the evangelists there, we also sent three teachers who were to hold the fort there until the regular evangelists came back. Also, Luka, one of the evangelists, refused to come home because there was no one to look after God's work during his absence. In addition, when we came away from Lotumbe we left two good strong Christians to stay there until the regular evangelists should return. Leaving the State Post Thursday afternoon we dropped down river some twenty or twenty-five miles and the next day reached Longa, where we saw the Christians again. Leaving Longa Friday evening by paddling all night we were able to reach Bolenge for Sunday.

" Now, Brethren of the Homeland, this letter may seem long and perhaps uninteresting to some, but if uninteresting it is because you have failed to see the vision which is no longer a vision to us here, but the most vivid, living reality, that of many, *many*

thousands waiting for the Light of Life, which can come to them only by giving them God's life-giving Word. You have not heard, oh, so many times, their earnest pleadings that you come back *soon,* that you come *often,* that you come and *live* with them, that you send them *teachers.*

"The country in the interior to the back of Bolenge, with its many villages, where already we have passed the five hundred and fifty mark in souls won for Christ, is but a handful, compared with the whole of the Bankundo country. We have carried the Gospel up the Great Bussira for two hundred and fifty miles, and up the Momboyo for fully one hundred and eighty miles. Beyond these points we cannot go at present, for lack of workers, but still the field is there. The Lonkundo language is spoken up the Momboyo River fully two hundred miles beyond where we have been able to go, and in all this territory there is not a single Protestant missionary, nor so much as a native teacher. Shall we leave all these, for whom Christ died, to perish without knowing of His love for them? May Jehovah speed the day when the knowledge of Him shall have reached to its uttermost parts and skirted the borders thereof of the great Lonkundo-speaking country."

It is significant that the Catholics never again built in Lotumbe.

BOOK II

INTRODUCTORY

WE come now to the second stage in the political history of the Congo basin, and at the same time to the second phase of Mr. Eldred's work on the Congo.

In the earlier pages of this memorial, some brief mention was made of the founding of the Congo Free State. Great hopes had been held as to the philanthropic nature of this project, and it had been hoped that a great Negro State might be founded in the basin of the Congo, under the benevolent sovereignty of Leopold II, which would afford protection to the weak and do away with the slave-trade, cannibalism, and kindred evils.

It would be of no profit now to stir up old bitternesses. It is sufficient to state that the Government of the Congo Free State did not altogether meet these expectations. So the missionaries were more than glad when on October eighteenth, 1908, the Congo Free State became a colony of Belgium, to be known henceforth as Congo Belge—Belgian Congo.

However much the friends of Africa were disappointed in King Leopold's régime in the Congo Free State, they have been made to rejoice in these days in the new régime of King Albert, a nephew of King Leopold II. Many reforms have been granted and the Colonial Government seems now to be seek-

ing the welfare of the natives, as well as sane commercial development.

These pages are being written in the shadow of the World War. Honest men will differ widely on the issues involved in that conflict, but it is certain that from its storm clouds no more kingly figure has emerged than Albert of Belgium. Right royally has he won the ancient motto, "Sans peur et sans reproche."

In September of that same year the Congo Government granted the Mission permission to open a station at Longa. This time then marks the end of Mr. Eldred's service at Bolenge, and the commencement of that even larger service he was to render in the Bussira region.

On the financial side, the planting of the new station was made possible by the generosity of Mr. and Mrs. Lyndon F. Lascell, of Springfield, Missouri. Mr. and Mrs. Eldred had been often in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Lascell and it was largely on account of their affectionate admiration for Mr. and Mrs. Eldred that they made their large gifts.

I

HEWING A STATION FROM THE JUNGLE

THIS forward step, of opening a station at Longa, had been looked forward to for some time. When the time came for it to be realized, all the missionaries rejoiced in the enthusiastic spirit shown by the Bolenge church. They knew that the opening of the new station meant the giving of about seventy members and several outstations and three missionaries, among them the one who had been with them since the organization of the church, nevertheless the whole feeling was of joy. All through the years Mr. Eldred had been teaching them that growing comes through giving, and they were sure that the opening of Longa Station meant larger things for Jesus Christ.

On October nineteenth, 1908, after welcoming a new colleague, Chas. P. Hedges, who arrived that month, and after a delightful conference with all the evangelists and a large number of the non-resident Christians, during which there were fifty baptisms, Mr. Eldred and Dr. Jaggard left for Longa. They made the journey in a small steel boat and were accompanied by a flotilla of six canoes, containing provisions, supplies, tools, and some building material. It was the high-water season, so at night the paddlers slept in trees, or on rude platforms under the trees, while the missionaries slept on the damp bottom of their boat. For four long, hot, tire-

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some days they toiled up the Ruki (Bussira) River. How they must have longed for a steamer!

On the Lord's Day, October twenty-fifth, the Church of Christ at Longa was organized with sixty-nine members, and a wonderfully sweet communion service was held out under the trees. The Gospel was preached far and near, and soon the influence of the little band commenced to grow. From the physical side the work of the missionaries was the converting of seventeen acres of almost impenetrable African jungle into a habitable dwelling place. So the workmen taken from Bolenge and others hired at Longa were armed with axes and machetes and clearing was commenced. However, they did not attempt to clear the whole station, but as soon as a little space was cleared, a temporary building was erected to serve as carpenter shop and storeroom, in which also the missionaries lived. Native houses were built for the workmen, a stable for the sheep and goats put up, and a three-room mud-walled house erected for the missionaries.

The greatest difficulty was the procuring of sufficient "ndele," the palm-leaf roofing described in an early chapter. This grows in swamps, and the swamp from which they had to get their "ndele" was distant and very difficult of entrance by canoe, and high-water floods compelled them to go to a still more distant one. But into the gathering of roofing the missionaries threw their own strength, as well as enthusiasm, as they had into all the difficult tasks of the new station, and at the end of six weeks the above-mentioned buildings were roofed, though their own house had neither doors nor windows.

They then returned to Bolenge for the annual Christmas Reunion of the church. Mr. Eldred was

never again located at Bolenge, but he often visited there, never failing to preach in the church.

As fevers and labours and journeys had commenced to tell on even his prodigious strength, Mr. Eldred went for a three weeks' rest on the steamer "Livingstone" of the Congo Balolo Mission, accompanying the writer and wife, who were leaving on furlough, as far as Stanley Pool. There he welcomed to the work Mr. and Mrs. E. R. Moon and they had a pleasant voyage up river together. On reaching Bolenge, the "Livingstone" took on board supplies, building material, household goods, with trees and shrubs for transplanting, and started for Longa on January twenty-ninth, 1909, landing the missionaries there the same day in comfort.

Mrs. Jaggard accompanied her husband on this second trip and the three workers had a happy, if strenuous time together. Neither the station nor the house was very inviting, but windows and doors were hung, cupboards made, a small kitchen built, with a room for orphan girls, and they settled down to make the best of the circumstances.

The first Lord's Day there were three baptisms, the first since the station had been occupied. A tabernacle was erected, large enough to seat three hundred people. During the next few months, about twenty more were baptized, evangelists were sent out into the interior and up the Momboyo River, outstations were opened, and the spiritual work of the station began in earnest.

From the first, sawyers had been sent into the forest with pit-saws, for the cutting of lumber. A large number of men were kept busy clearing the station. Brick were made and burned, for one important part of Longa's equipment was a machine for

pressing brick by lever power. A garden spot was chosen, a fence built around it, and seeds planted.

Mrs. Jaggard took in some orphan girls and commenced to train them. She also began to teach the women. A school was started, in which reading and writing were the chief branches taught. Before long some of the workmen were able to read.

Dr. Jaggard's medical work proved to be a real entering wedge for the Gospel. Not only were the sick healed, but several major operations were performed under circumstances which would have daunted the soul of many surgeons accustomed to modern hospital conditions. But those operations were successful and caused many to be interested in the Truth. As Dr. Jaggard expressed it, "In each operative case 'the knife has literally cut a way' for the Gospel."

II

"ANXIETY FOR ALL THE CHURCHES"

THE progress recorded in the previous chapter did not go on in the smooth and uninterrupted fashion that narrative might seem to indicate. For with this new period in his career, Mr. Eldred found that, in addition to the manifold toils and cares of Longa station and church, there was laid upon him the apostolic "anxiety for all the churches," especially for the infant ones at Lotumbe and Monieka.

Hardly had the three missionaries settled down to work at Longa when word came that at Monieka, where the work had been opened in January of 1908 by Dr. Widdowson and the writer, the Catholics were trying to drive the Bolenge teachers out by force. This made it necessary for Mr. Eldred to leave for there on February sixth. He found the situation at Monieka very difficult, and a Government officer, who had been sent to survey the ground asked for by the Mission for a station, seemed to think it his duty to make matters more difficult, and had struck the evangelist, Iso Timothée, without any provocation. Under such circumstances it was a trip filled with many vexations for Mr. Eldred. So it is not surprising to those who know the effect of vexation and trouble on the physical man in such a climate that he came down with a bad fever. This one was of a more severe type, called "Blackwater Fever" (Haemoglobinuric Fever). His native helpers fol-

lowed his directions and did all they could for him, while the Monieka Christians manned a large canoe and paddled the one hundred and twenty miles to Longa in one day. Dr. and Mrs. Jaggard were fortunate enough to catch a passing steamer of the S. A. B. Trading Company, whose directors and agents have through the years been very friendly to the Mission. Thus they were able to hurry to Monieka. On their arrival they found that the critical point of the fever had passed and after a few days Mr. Eldred was able to return to Longa. On this trip six people were baptized, the first to be baptized at that place, though quite a number of Monieka people had been baptized at Bolenge.

After a short rest at Longa, a visit to Lotumbe seemed imperative. So the station was left in charge of native helpers, and all three missionaries went to the Lotumbe district. On the Lord's Day, April eleventh, two people were baptized by Mr. Eldred, at Lotumbe, the first baptisms in the Momboyo River. The interesting thing about these two people, one of whom was a woman, was that they were of the despised Bacwa tribe. The Bacwa are supposed to be remnants of the original inhabitants of this part of Africa, and are typical Negritos. Bankundo men have some dealings with Bacwa men, even if they despise them, but it is taboo for a man of the Bankundo to have any association with a woman of the Bacwa. So much is this true that if a Bacwa woman is about to meet an Nkundo man in the path, she will turn aside until he is past. So it was a wonderful thing to the assembled crowd when the White Man took this despised Bacwa woman by the hand, led her down into the water and baptized her into the name of the Son of God. The Bankundo

chiefs and elders put their hands over their mouths in their expressive gesture of wonderment, and said, "Is this Jesus message for the Bacwa, also?"

It had been hoped that some itinerating might be done in that locality, and with that in view the missionaries had gone up river beyond Lotumbe as far as Ifulu, when messages from Bolenge made it necessary that the trip be cut short.

From Ifulu Mr. Eldred went by canoe to Coquilhatville to interview the Commissaire of the District regarding many problems, especially those at Monieka.

Then he and Dr. Widdowson went by Trading steamer to Monieka to confirm the Christians and settle some difficulties. Nearly four weeks were spent in this journey, and much was accomplished. Seventeen were baptized, two native churches erected, and the veteran evangelist Ekakula ordained as an elder in the Bolenge church. Every Lord's Day after this the Lord's Table was spread at Monieka.

Early in June Is'olumbu, the evangelist who had started the work at Lotumbe, was ordained at Longa as an elder in that church and its evangelist in charge at Lotumbe, to have the same position there as had been given Ekakula at Monieka.

Mr. Eldred accompanied Is'olumbu and his associates, Itökö and Böntöle, on their return to Lotumbe. On arrival he found that the baptism of the two Bacwas on the previous trip had had a very decided effect. For every person of that tribe in their part of Lotumbe had been enrolled as a seeker after the "Words of God." Also, many of the Bankundo people were seeking the same good words.

On this visit a little group of Christians were

gathered together and placed under Is'olumbu's oversight. Among them were Is'ekae and his wife, who had been baptized at Bolenge in February, 1906. They were natives of a town near Lotumbe and moved to the latter place so as to have spiritual fellowship. Another of this group was a young man named Bokambanza, the first fruits of Is'olumbu's work, who had been baptized at Bolenge in January of 1909. Altogether this little nucleus of a church numbered eleven members and Mr. Eldred felt quite encouraged as to its future.

It is worthy of note just here, that while in a very large sense Mr. Eldred was always interested in all the stations, and never forgot Bolenge, his first love, in later years his heart's best affection was given to the work at Longa and Lotumbe.

One other incident of his second term of service deserves to be recorded. An evangelist from Bolenge was located at the town of Nkombo, about halfway between Bolenge and Longa, on the river bank. Some people of the town, pretending to have some claim on her, seized the wife of this evangelist and carried her away to the part of the town farthest from the river. The evangelist appealed to Mr. Eldred to help his wife to liberty. As there was no Government officer near, the missionary, his heart ever attuned to womanhood's cry of distress, embarked in a canoe and went to Nkombo, arriving late that afternoon. The people at first denied any knowledge of the young Christian woman, but Mr. Eldred soon found her in a filthy hut, in cruel stocks, where she had been for days. The influence of the white man secured her release from this prison, but none would agree to her going back to her husband. It was now growing dark, but this man of God, who

never knew fear, placed himself between the woman and her persecutors and told her to run for the canoe at the beach. And then there ensued a wild time. The missionary wisely felt it no time to indulge in theories of non-resistance, though he held very decided views in that line, but picked up a convenient stick. They were a hundred to one, but no one who ever felt the muscles of Ray Eldred's left arm would think that even such odds were too great. These natives are used to striking only with a downward motion of a club, but he used his in the opposite way, swinging it almost in a circle. The darkness made it difficult for him to find the path, but it also made them afraid to shoot arrows, so he was able to fight backwards until the battle took them where the path forked, making two roads to the beach. His enemies divided, one party choosing the path he did not, to surround him and seize the woman. But as soon as his quick ears heard the sound of their running feet going "kilidi-kilidi" down the path, he told the woman to run faster for the canoe, then threw valour to the winds, and ran also, beating both parties to the beach. On arrival there he could find neither woman nor canoe and had another struggle with his pursuers. After a few minutes he found that his men had taken the woman into the canoe and paddled a little way upstream, and soon all embarked safely for Longa.

As one reads of these journeys far and wide, and realizes that in the five months after coming to Longa, Mr. Eldred had travelled fourteen hundred miles, and more than a thousand of them in open canoe, he is not surprised that even his mighty strength began to fail. Add to the multitude of his toils his anxiety for loved ones at home, his solicitude

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for all the churches whose problems lay so heavily upon his heart, and the effects of his sickness at Monieka, in addition to many other fevers, and one sees that the time had come for a rest. This was the verdict of the physicians, and on July fourth, 1909, Mr. Eldred left on his second furlough.

His second term of service was only two years and a half in length, yet it stands out as one of the most remarkable periods in the history of the Foreign Christian Missionary Society in the Congo.

Dr. Dye returned to the work at just about the same time, their steamers passing in midocean. Mrs. Dye's health never permitted her to return. Dr. Dye was accompanied by Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Smith.

III

ONCE MORE IN THE HOMELAND

MRS. ELDRED, in the meantime, had not been well, and in addition to the care of three husky boys and the anxiety for her husband, had spent five months at the Battle Creek Sanitarium, where she had to undergo a very severe operation. Mr. Eldred's encounter with the buffalo had been a severe shock to her and he practically gave up hunting after this, so that she might not have that kind of anxiety for him.

Mr. Eldred's second furlough was spent like the other, in enlisting friends for the work and in impressing upon the churches everywhere their obligation to the unsaved millions amid Congo's forests. Mr. and Mrs. Eldred were present and spoke at the Centennial Convention of the Disciples of Christ, held at Pittsburgh, in October, 1909. During this gathering occurred an event which brought great joy to the heart of Mr. Eldred. Dr. Dye, Mr. Eldred, and the other missionaries had been pleading and praying for a steamer for the Congo work, and now their prayers were answered. Thanks to the heroic generosity of the churches of Oregon, helped by some others in other States, a fine little steamer had been built in Pittsburgh. It was called the "Oregon" and on Wednesday afternoon, October thirteenth, was dedicated to the winning of Congoland. A great host of Convention pilgrims were present on this unique occasion, and Mr. Eldred was

one of those who made short addresses. Few others in that host rejoiced as he did and few others had the same reason, for he knew what it meant to travel hundreds of miles in open canoes.

Among the many places visited, he spoke in Missionary Rallies at Baltimore, Washington, Wheeling, Norfolk, Richmond, Roanoke, New York, Philadelphia, Syracuse, Buffalo, Pittsburgh, Cleveland, Akron, Columbus, Canton, Toledo, South Bend, Grand Rapids, and Detroit.

In the summer of 1910 he was one of the speakers at the Convention of the World's Sunday School Association, at Washington, D. C.

On his way home from that Convention Mr. Eldred stopped off at Charleroi, Pennsylvania, to visit his former colleague, Dr. Widdowson. Speaking in the church there, Mr. Eldred touched on the work of Roman Catholic Missions in the Congo, and denounced their methods in scathing terms. He also related some of his own experiences with them.

After the meeting a gentleman came up and spoke to him, saying that he was a Roman Catholic. It soon transpired that he had been deeply hurt by Mr. Eldred's message. As a result of the conversation this gentleman gave Mr. Eldred a very good organ for the Longa church.

While on furlough Mr. and Mrs. Eldred's hearts were made glad by the news that Lotumbe had been chosen as a station in October, 1909, and that application for a grant of land from the Belgian Colonial Government had been made. Then they were made gladder by the news of the opening of Lotumbe Station on May twenty-fourth, 1910, by Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Smith, who had joined the Mission in August, 1909, and had been for a time with Dr.

and Mrs. Jaggard at Longa. A large portion of the members of the new church at Lotumbe had been members at Longa and Bolenge—especially at Longa. Despite this, the Annual Report showed a membership of ninety-three at Longa.

The National Convention of the Disciples of Christ for 1910 was held at Topeka, Kansas. Mr. and Mrs. Eldred spoke on that occasion, also. A few extracts from his address are here given:

"After thirty years of Roman Catholic dominion in the Congo, there is yet to be established the first real public school."

"The only hope for Congo's millions is through the medium of the Protestant Christian Church."

"And what of the cost? Business enterprises are counted successful, not according to the cost in dollars, or even in life, but according to the returns on that which is invested. The Congo Railway cost its millions and a human life for every tie used in its construction, and yet men call it successful. But when your own work in that land, covering a period of eleven years, and which can already show a fruitage of over a thousand souls redeemed, costs the lives of two workers and the health of a few others, some there are who are even now crying out, 'Does it pay?'"

Soon after this Mr. and Mrs. Eldred heard the good news that the steamer "Oregon," which had been shipped to the Congo in sections, had been successfully reconstructed by E. R. Moon and R. S. Wilson. The latter with Mrs. Wilson and Miss Edna V. Eck (now Mrs. W. H. Edwards) had sailed just after the Centennial Convention.

The question of their children had arisen in their minds long before this and had been settled. Soon

after the birth of the first child, Mr. Eldred wrote to the churches who had chosen him as their missionary:

"There is one subject on which I wish to write you, lest there be a misunderstanding between us. You will have received our card announcing the birth of our little boy. Of course we love our little one and would not shrink from the responsibility which otherwise would be ours, of caring for and training his young life. Yet the cold fact remains that when we return to this, the Congo land, one of the most benighted and therefore the most needy fields of the Earth, *we will be obliged* to leave our dear one at home.

"This is not a new plan of our own. We knew it before we came to the Congo. It is true of all the Congo missionaries who have been blessed with children, in our own and other societies. Do not think, dear Brethren, that we look upon this matter lightly, for upon us will come the greatest test; yet we trust we shall be prepared for it when it comes. No doubt there will be some to criticize us as there have been those to criticize others who have had to meet this problem; of these I would say that perhaps they have not yet been made to realize fully the meaning of the Savior's words in the tenth chapter of Mark, twenty-ninth and thirtieth verses, when He said, 'There is no man that has left house, or brethren, or sisters, or mother, or father, or children, or lands, for my sake and for the Gospel's sake, but shall receive a hundred-fold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come, eternal life.' May it please the Lord to count us worthy to bear this and all other trials we may meet, that we, sup-

MR. AND MRS. ELDRED AND THEIR THREE SONS. (SOUTH BEND, 1910)

ported by Him, may not cease to proclaim His love to these people who are dying in darkness and sin. There have been cases where a church has refused to support a missionary because it was necessary for that missionary to leave his children at home. I write you that you may know the case and act accordingly. But we sincerely trust that you may see the matter in the same light that we do. We feel confident that at the proper time He who guided His people of old will not fail us, and that kind and loving hands, though they be those of another, will care for our child."

The boys were left in the Wharton Memorial Home at Hiram, Ohio, under the kindly care of Mrs. M. D. Adams, who had herself been a missionary many years in India, and who fulfilled the trust expressed in that early letter. Parting with the children was a severe trial for Mrs. Eldred, though she had known for years that it must come. She was first of all a Mother, and among the many beautiful poems found among her papers, this one was marked especially:

> "God thought to give the sweetest thing
> In His Almighty power
> To earth. So deeply pondering what
> It should be, one hour
> In love of life and joy of heart
> Surpassing every other
> He moved the gates of Heaven apart
> And gave to earth a Mother."

As the day drew near for the parting, she often said, "Oh, how can I leave my babies?" But she was given strength for even this test of faith, and, realizing that it was not a time to show their feelings, they separated from their children with brave hearts,

never again to see them here among the children of men.

In order that their health might be fully restored, it was the plan of Mr. and Mrs. Eldred to spend the entire winter in France, taking additional work in French. They left South Bend November seventeenth, 1910, and some restful weeks were spent in Marseilles, but imperative need on the field caused the time to be cut short, and after a stay of about a month they sailed from La Pallice late in January, 1911.

IV

BUSY DAYS AT LONGA

THE following letter, written by the missionaries on the field at the time when it was known that Mr. and Mrs. Eldred were returning to the work, expresses better the esteem in which they were held than any epitaphs possibly could.

"At a meeting of the field committee of the Congo Mission of the Foreign Christian Missionary Society, held at Bolenge, November seventh to ninth, it was voted unanimously that we send an autograph letter to you, welcoming both of you back to your work here.

"We want to do this because of your splendid record in the past. Two stations have felt the impress of Mr. Eldred's personality, backed up by Mrs. Eldred's prayers, while she could not be with him and with us the second term. At both of these stations the way you have proclaimed the Gospel has been the preaching of a living Christ, who saves and can save. The changes in the lives of these whom you have taught speak with more eloquence of this than anything we can write.

"In kindly, gracious courtesy you have ever striven to honour your fellow missionaries, and we remember with pleasure the happy days we have worked together. We all admired the splendid spirit with which you gave up an old, well-equipped station and went with enthusiasm to the task of

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building where no man had even as yet laid a foundation. Some of us have realized since then what this really meant, in rigorous toil and unpleasant privations, and for that we honour you. And the building up of Longa Station during the short time your health permitted you to stay there, your long and dangerous journeys in carrying the Gospel to the most remote parts of our field, your incessant pressing home of the good news to every hearer in the darkness—all these have increased the high regard in which we have held you.

"Many of those you taught in hand and spirit and brain are now our efficient helpers; those you won out of heathenism are carrying the Gospel you gave them to their brethren who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death; the buildings you have erected are being used each day for the furtherance of the cause you love so well. You have not laboured in vain. Those whom you guided along the narrow path which leadeth unto righteousness are in their lives speaking gratitude to you; and many who have passed along into the path which groweth brighter and brighter unto the perfect day have found the rest and the reward you so often have promised them.

"We need hardly say that you are needed. The demand is even greater than we have ever known. The granting of a third station; the hope of still another; and the opening of new fields; these have made your coming at this time almost imperative. The Holy Spirit calls you to new victories; we await with joy your fellowship with us in the Lord and in His service.

"May you come with spiritual help for each one of us, and with a large supply of spiritual resources

for the native churches. May our Heavenly Father grant to both of you health of body and every enjoyment you crave as you journey to us. We welcome you; the native churches at Bolenge, Longa, Lotumbe, and Monieka welcome you; the heathen who know and esteem you welcome you. Blessed is he who cometh in the name of the Lord."

(Signed)

Herbert Smith	E. R. Moon
Mrs. Herbert Smith	Mrs. E. R. Moon
Charles P. Hedges	Louis F. Jaggard, M.D.
Royal J. Dye, M.D.	Annella Jaggard
R. S. Wilson	Edna V. Eck
Mrs. R. S. Wilson	A. F. Hensey
	Mrs. A. F. Hensey

On their arrival at Léopoldville, Mr. and Mrs. Eldred were accorded passage on the English Baptist steamer, "Endeavour." The first days of the journey were very pleasantly spent, for there were a number of missionaries on board, and there is no finer fellowship than that among the Heralds of the Cross. But late in the afternoon of the third day the steamer struck a hidden reef of rocks, which tore several holes in the steel hull. Had it not been that the reef was broad and flat, the steamer would have been lost. As it was, it slowly settled upon the rocks and rested there.

Mr. Eldred helped the ladies to a lifeboat, and to the shore, after which, with his usual abandon, he threw himself into the task of lightening the steamer of thirty tons of cargo. Meanwhile the passengers had been camping in the rain under a tent-fly on a muddy beach. The British Consul,

Mr. Campbell, who was also on board, went overland fifteen miles to the American Baptist Mission at Tchumberi, and help came from there. After three days' work with the steamer it was floated and the steamer "Livingstone" also came to help. The accident happened on Wednesday and on the next Monday they were able to proceed on their journey.

The rest of the journey was made on the "Livingstone," which arrived at Bolenge February twenty-fifth, and Mr. and Mrs. Eldred received a doubly hearty welcome from the missionaries and natives, on account of their deliverance from such a danger. They found that all the missionaries from all the stations had come down to Bolenge for a conference, so several days were spent in discussing the problems of the work, and in laying plans for the future.

Embarking on the "Oregon" they reached Longa March the second. And such a welcome as they had! Great crowds lined the beach to shake the hand of Mr. Eldred and to meet Mrs. Eldred, whom most of them had never seen up to this time.

Then they went on up the Momboyo to Lotumbe and saw the progress of the new station; came back again to Longa; then went up the Great Bussira to Monieka. There Mr. Eldred and Mr. Moon baptized nineteen people and had a three days' itineration in some of the nearer villages.

Mr. and Mrs. Eldred settled down to work at Longa on March seventeenth. But Dr. and Mrs. Jaggard were now due to leave on furlough and had not been very well. Therefore, they left for home on April twenty-fourth. Mr. and Mrs. Eldred were alone at Longa for eighteen months.

Dr. Royal J. Dye came home at the same time as Dr. and Mrs. Jaggard. His departure meant much

extra responsibility for Mr. Eldred. While it has not been possible for Dr. and Mrs. Dye to return to the field, they have helped to keep up interest in the Congo work among the churches in the United States. At present Dr. Dye is one of those leading in the Men and Millions Movement, which means so much for the world's evangelization.

In July, 1911, Mrs. Eldred wrote home of the successes and difficulties of the work. In her former terms she had written very seldom, but as one follows her vivid pen, he can but wish she had written more:

"On the morning of June 16th, 1911, the fifteen evangelists came in from the back country where they had been preaching and teaching. Forty-six people came with them, some to ask for baptism and some to see for themselves, for the first time, the White Man and some of the ways of civilization. The people are slow to believe what the evangelists tell of the 'Good Story' and want to hear it from the lips of the White Man himself.

"Mr. Eldred already had a good force of men and boys and the following Monday the list was increased to ninety-seven, so you see he had his hands full. Those who come in want to work while here in order to buy food. There were two special evangelistic meetings daily, besides the school, in which several new classes were formed.

"Not many of the back country people wear clothes, but have the tribal marks cut on the face and body, besides many deeply embossed fanciful ones for beauty's sake.

"Each evangelist had an interesting story to tell of his experiences. Some reported much opposition from the Catholics, but usually their meetings were

well attended. One, Nsomi, told of the arguments he had had with some Catholic teachers.

"There were continual disputes between our evangelists and the Catholic teachers. Finally, the chiefs of Bongale, a village of some 3,000 people, arranged for a large public meeting at which each side was to be given a full public hearing. One Catholic teacher in his speech said Christ went into the water ankle deep and John the Baptist dipped up some water and poured it on his head. Later on another said Christ went into the water knee deep and still another contended that the water was waist deep. Then Nsomi opened his book and read to them the account of Christ's baptism in the River Jordan, with an explanation of the same.

"This evangelist, Nsomi, is a veritable pearl redeemed from the depths of sin, and, since his baptism nearly four years ago, has been almost constantly engaged as an evangelist of the church. He has learned to read well and is no mean contestant for the faith that is in Christ. On this occasion he was shrewd enough not to try to convince his opponents, but to gain not only the ears but also the good will of his large audience. This he did, not only by reading from the Scriptures themselves, a thing which the Catholics could not do, but also showing the many discrepancies in their teaching.

"After three weeks' teaching and preparation, on Sunday, July ninth, twenty men and boys and seven women confessed their Saviour and were buried with Him in baptism."

As Longa was a new station, and so many of the people in the regions around about had never heard the Gospel, itineration seemed to be the great need, so Mr. Eldred spent many weeks in journeys, on foot

and in canoe, to the Momboyo and Bolingo Rivers, and in all directions in the interior, leaving Mrs. Eldred alone at Longa.

In June of 1911 Mrs. Eldred was attacked by Blackwater fever. There was no doctor at all in the Mission at the time, and the "Oregon" was away down river, but Miss Eck and Mrs. Hensey hurried up there by Trading steamer, and the Belgian doctor at Coquilhatville sent medicine and directions. After her recovery from this attack Mrs. Eldred seemed to gain for a time, but this sickness really marked the "beginning of sorrows" in the Mission.

Some time after this she wrote of the need of doctors for the Congo:

"In America, where there are so many doctors that it is often a struggle for them to have practice enough to enable them to make a living, people cannot understand what it would mean to need medical aid and not be able to get it. Here the situation is very much different, for not only do we need medical aid for ourselves, but there are millions of natives in this country who might be healed of many and varied ailments.

"Let me tell you something of our situation: Longa is seventy-five miles from the State Post of Coquilhatville, on the Ruki River, where but few steamers pass and white visitors are seldom seen. Should one member of the Mission get sick the other must render what aid he can and watch alone, not knowing which way the turn will be. Should the sickness be a severe attack of malarial fever the crisis is over in a few hours, but should the illness be an attack of haematuric fever it is several days before the danger is past. Some may say, 'Why don't they call the doctor?' There are no railroads in this part of the

country, so all travel must be by river or a narrow footpath through the jungle. It is one day's travel down to Coquilhatville and three days' back by canoe, so you see the patient would either be dead or well before help could arrive. Lotumbe is seventy-five miles further up on the Momboyo River, so you see they are one hundred and fifty miles from a doctor.

"Why are there no doctors ready and anxious to come where the need is so great?

"The missionary, though he be not a medical man, must of necessity do much medical work and surgical work; treat fevers and other diseases, pull teeth, lance abscesses, remove filaria of elephantiasis from the eyeballs of the natives, attend confinement cases, as well as many other things. Not long ago Mr. Eldred had to chloroform a native in order to remove the filaria of elephantiasis from his eye, and another day sew up a cut about three inches long in a man's arm. Sometimes he will pull teeth for white people and care for traders who are sick and have no knowledge of medicine.

"Perhaps you would like to know about the supply of surgical instruments in the dispensary: There are three or four old rusty toothed forceps to pull teeth for white people and natives; one hemostat or artery forceps, one old pair of rusty tweezers, two pairs of scissors, one needle forceps, a few needles, and one hypodermic outfit. Some may ask why we are without a good supply of necessary instruments. The Society would be very glad indeed to send us a good supply of instruments if some one would only furnish the money with which to buy them. Surgical instruments are very expensive and there are so many calls for money."

For some years all the missionaries of the various

Mission Boards working in Belgian Congo have been wont to meet together in conference every two years. In September of 1911 that Conference was held at Bolenge and forty-six missionaries of the various Societies attended this gathering and Mr. Eldred read a thoughtful paper, as well as taking part in the many helpful discussions. He was also chosen a member of the Continuation Committee of this Conference.

Writing to Mrs. S. B. Dobyns at Bethany, West Virginia, an account of this conference, Mrs. Eldred closed as follows:

"We held a conference of our own workers afterwards, so we did not leave Bolenge until the following Monday, the twenty-third. We arrived at Longa the next day, after an absence of more than two weeks, glad indeed to be at home and at work again. The next few days were busy ones, as we were getting the forty-three evangelists ready to go out to the needy fields to be gone until Christmas time. The 'Oregon' came back from Lotumbe on Friday and the following morning they left for Monieka, Mr. Eldred going with them four hours steaming up to the mouth of the Bolingo River, then from there he went by steel boat to some villages where he left four evangelists. This is a new field where there are countless numbers of people who had never yet heard of God and His Son, Jesus. Mr. Eldred did not return until the following Wednesday, so you see I was all alone from early Saturday morning until Wednesday evening after dark. You can imagine that I was rather lonely, no other white people for many miles in any direction. At night when all was still and I the only one in the house I wished very much that more workers might come

to help garner the sheaves, so that one white person need not be left alone for days at a time. The natives ask us often why people do not come out here to teach them, for they say that there is too much work for the few who are here.

"The 'Oregon' returned from Monieka last Wednesday and reported twenty-five baptisms there the Sunday previous; this makes a total of two hundred and thirty-six in the Mission for October and November."

In April of 1911 Mrs. Eldred was chosen as the Living-Link missionary of the church at Cameron, West Virginia. When she was notified of this relationship, she wrote them an interesting picture of the work and of their life in a letter dated June eighth, some extracts from which follow:

"I was very agreeably surprised to receive your good messages of cheer by last mail. As our mail comes but once every three weeks we always look anxiously for the steamer. Bolenge is situated but seven miles from the State Post of Coquilhatville, while Longa is seventy-five miles, and our newest station, Lotumbe, is seventy-five miles beyond us. Lotumbe sends a canoe down with their mail, so we send their mail with ours on the S. A. B. Trading steamer, which passes here every three weeks on Thursday, returning a few days later with our letters from the homeland. We then send the Lotumbe canoe back up with their share of the mail. So you see we do not get mail very often and if we only get a few letters we think we are forgotten!

"I wish I could describe our field out here so you could understand our situation. The station here is but a little clearing in the forest jungle, though our

grounds, seventeen and a half acres, are not all cleared yet; some of it is dense jungle; the river front is all cleared. Longa is situated on a high bluff overlooking the River Ruki; about fifteen miles south of the Equator. A number of tropical fruit trees have been set out and gardens made. At first the only residence was one with mud walls and a mud floor, but last year Dr. Jaggard built a brick house. It is far from being finished, though it has been occupied for about a year. It takes a long time to build a house here, for the necessary lumber has to be sawed in the forest with pit saws and carried in on men's shoulders; clay for making brick has to be found and the bricks made and burned; then the white man has to be his own architect and builder, and all particular work has to be done with his own hands, as no trained help is to be had here. Mr. Eldred has at present more than sixty workmen and boys on the payroll and it takes some time to look after them. The station has to be kept up and the grass cut often, for you know we are here almost on the Equator, in what is known as the daily thunderstorm belt, and verdure is always green and abundant the year round.

"Perhaps something about our daily life here would interest you. Owing to the heat we wear white or light wash clothes all the time. We can raise green vegetables, such as beans, lettuce, tomatoes, etc. (but no Irish potatoes). Our staple groceries such as butter, sugar and flour, we have to order from England. They come sealed in air-tight tin cans, because of the long ocean voyage and the climate here. We can expect an order of goods in from six to nine months after the order has been sent to our agent in England, so you see we have to

keep a good stock of provisions on hand all the time. We cannot send an order in the morning and expect the goods for dinner that day! We have a flock of chickens and can buy small native chickens and eggs from the natives. We also have a flock of sheep and goats, thus having a little fresh milk to use, and occasionally an animal to kill for fresh meat. Our sheep here have hair on their bodies like a horse, instead of wool.

"There are no horses or cows or beasts of burden in this country. All loads are carried on the women's backs. There are no roads and the only means of travel save by water is by narrow footpaths through the jungle, through swamps and streams. These people are not civilized, save the few who are connected with our stations. The people live in small houses of bamboo and thatch, and their only article of clothing is a small loin cloth. They rub their bodies with a mixture of palm oil and red powder made from the camwood; they also fill their hair with this paste after braiding it. They dress their hair about every three months, so you can imagine its filthy condition. Domestic slavery is the curse of the country and all women are sold as wives whether they are slaves or free women. They have no form of marriage; when a man wants a wife he simply goes and buys one and takes her to his place of abode. There is no word for virtue or purity in their language, so you may know they are a very immoral people.

"Yesterday we had the pleasure of baptizing twenty-seven people here at Longa. The evangelists go out into the interior towns for two months at a time, then when they return there are a number who come for baptism.

"When I tell you I have not seen a white woman and but two or three white men since May fourth, you may understand something about the isolation. At Lotumbe they are still more isolated than we are here. Since March sixth Mrs. Smith has not seen a white woman and but few white men. Now that we have the steamer 'Oregon' we will have visitors more often, for it will make at least two trips a year to bring supplies.

"You must not get discouraged and think I do not intend to write. Just remember that it usually takes two months for a letter to reach us, sometimes longer, so by the time an answer returns five or six months have passed. I shall try to tell you about the progress of the work here from time to time."

V

A MANY-SIDED SERVICE

IN the meantime the work at the station was not altogether neglected. Mrs. Eldred was conducting meetings for the women, having much of the direction of the church during Mr. Eldred's frequent absences, looking after the Orphanage, teaching the girls housekeeping, sewing, modesty, cleanliness, and the Christ life, and also finding time for numberless deeds of mercy among the unfortunates of Longa, as well as being devoted to her household duties. How spick and span she kept their Congo home! The plain board floor in their dining room was as clean as the table, and the kitchen utensils shone like mirrors.

She was trying also to do some special training of the wives of the evangelists. Her hope was that each one of these wives would not only hold special services for the women, but carry into the heathen villages something of the spirit of Christian home life.

Lumber cutting, brick making, preaching, teaching, healing—all these and more kept Mr. Eldred busy from morning to night. From the time Mr. Eldred brought his bride to Congoland, he had always planned to build her a home which should be just to her liking. Now it seemed necessary to build another dwelling at Longa, as they were living in the one erected by Dr. Jaggard and they hoped that a few months more would see the Dr. and Mrs.

Jaggard back on the field. So bricks were made, lumber piled up to season, and hardware ordered from England. After some months the foundations were laid and the walls commenced to rise, eagerly watched by Mrs. Eldred.

Mr. Eldred was very chivalrous in his thought of women. No matter how busy or tired he was, he never liked to appear in the presence of any of the Mission ladies unless he was neatly dressed. Nor was he ever too much occupied to leave his work to render any of the ladies a service. The wrongs of native women caused his soul to rise up in indignant protest, and he was a very knight in righting those when it was possible.

And this chivalry found a tender expression in this home he was building for Mrs. Eldred. Every feature of it was designed for her comfort and pleasure. It was built low, so that she might have but few steps to climb; it had a fireplace, because in her frailty she felt the dampness; the kitchen was built very near, to save her walking far. In a very real sense its building was a labour of love.

One who has never seen Ray Eldred at work can hardly appreciate the tremendous energy and industry of this "White Man of Work." The natives never tired of watching and wondering. Being left-handed, he could use almost any tool with either hand, and when high up on a building they would see him carelessly toss the hammer from one hand to another and drive nails with either, it was amusing to watch them as they put the hand over the mouth with long drawn out "Oh's!" of wonder and admiration.

Did he lack a rake? he made one. Or a canthook? His ingenuity did not fail. Did he lack tin shears

to cut the sheets of galvanized iron for the roof? Away to the forge, and once again the natives stand around and watch him as the newly made tool snips its way through the hard sheets.

The many-sidedness of his work and the versatility of his talents always characterized his missionary service. This was noticed especially by Professor Deweese, who wrote once of Mr. Eldred:

"His versatility will be clearly illustrated when you read that Mr. Eldred went out as a Mechanical Missionary—to have charge of building operations, the development of the domestic life, the sanitary conditions of the station. The remark was made then that within two years the efficiency of Mr. Eldred as a Missionary Evangelist would manifest itself in striking ways. The expectations of his college years were more than verified in his entire career on the field. It is particularly worthy of note, and to this fact his colleagues bear witness, that the great missionary activity which characterizes our African missionary work is chiefly due to the constant emphasis laid upon this duty in his teaching."

He was as versatile in his nature. On matters of principle he held very strong convictions and could on occasion be so stern and inflexible that one was forcibly reminded of the Puritan strain in his ancestry. In such times the words of the poet fitted him well:

> "Conscious of strength, he loved to stand alone,
> Steadfast and cool amid the storm and stress,
> . . . . a piece of Plymouth Rock."

And in this quality lay much of his force of character and fitness for leadership.

On the other hand, positive as he was, few men

could yield more gracefully than Mr. Eldred. If he were convinced that he had taken the wrong side of a question, then he came over to the other side with the same enthusiasm. In matters of Mission policy he had his own ideas and advocated them vigorously, but when he found that the majority of his brethren felt differently, he gave up, and bowed to the general will. All his younger brethren remember an instance of this at the last Annual Convention of the Mission he attended, just a few weeks before his death. Finding himself standing alone on a question regarding which he had for years held very strong opinions, he sacrificed his cherished ideas to preserve harmony.

And how tender he could be! No sorrowing or needy one ever came to him in vain, if he was able to help, and no penitent soul went away from him without having seen through him the compassionate Christ. At one of the busiest periods of his work he spent an hour a day preaching to a deaf and dumb man through an interpreter. How happy he was when this man was baptized in October of 1911!

This was seen also in their home life. Mr. and Mrs. Eldred were of heroic mould and their lives were busy and troubles came, but they found time to be joyous and to be glad. After the first term Mrs. Eldred seldom felt well, but on the days when she was better, few entered more heartily than she into the play time. Mr. Eldred usually had an appetite commensurate with his huge frame, and she never tired of bantering him about it, and his ringing laugh, as she told some joke on him, how it made problems and perplexities vanish! During her stay at Battle Creek she had imbibed some of the food reform ideas of the Sanitarium, but these never appealed to Mr.

Eldred, who under ordinary circumstances could digest anything. Many of the missionaries will recall one time when Mr. Eldred was not very well and Mrs. Eldred told him he had eaten something not good for him, with what a gleam of fun in his eyes he retorted, "I never did have any indigestion until you quit giving me pie!"

In May of 1912 Dr. and Mrs. Jaggard returned from their furlough, but the Government had just granted permission for a station at Monieka, so instead of being with Mr. and Mrs. Eldred at Longa, it was necessary for them to go and open the station at Monieka.

In June Mr. Eldred had quite a serious accident. While opening a bale of cloth a small piece of rivet flew into his right eye, cutting the eyeball badly. Fortunately, Dr. Jaggard happened to be at Longa at the time and treated the injured eye. After a couple of weeks he seemed to have recovered, but never afterward could he see quite so well with that eye. This was very unfortunate, as for many years his left eye had been the weaker of the two and now was left in its weakness the better of the two.

Mr. Stephen J. Corey, Secretary of the Foreign Christian Missionary Society, made a visit to the Congo in the summer of 1912. He wrote an intensely interesting account of his trip and of the work in a book entitled, "Among Central African Tribes." In that account he devotes a number of pages to Mr. and Mrs. Eldred and the work at Longa. These few selections are taken from that work:

"Longa is wonderfully beautiful for a new station. . . . Two fine brick houses are nearly complete, and I saw the first chimney since coming to Congo. . . .

Eldred is quite an industrial missionary and has a fine workshop with hand-power saw, forge, and other apparatus. . . . One of the sweetest and most spiritual experiences of my life was here this morning at 8:30, when Mr. Eldred and I baptized sixteen converts in the Bussira. . . . The service was most reverent and the singing excellent. Mr. Eldred seems to be doing a very steady and substantial work. . . . The school teaches reading, writing, and a little arithmetic. From four to five each day French is taught. . . . Eldred is of the pioneer instinct and likes exploration and the danger of opening new districts. He has had some very thrilling experiences in this connection. He has endured much hardship and danger in this frontier work."

As one looks back over those busy years at Longa, with only one man for so many duties, he cannot wonder at the prayer of one of the Christian boys. At a meeting conducted by the natives themselves, this lad prayed something like this:

"O God, have you no more white teachers left in America? We need a teacher with need itself. We have only one white man for all the work, and we do not hear of any other coming. If there are some there still, let Thy Holy Spirit seek out a teacher for us, and let him come soon. And give him much fluency of speech, that he may quickly teach us Thy Gospel."

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VI

BY CANOE TO THE BOLINGO

ON account of her health, Mrs. Eldred had very few opportunities to go on journeys with her husband, but in April, 1912, she made a trip to the Bolingo, or Lokweji River, with him. So interesting was her account of this trip that, although it covered six closely typed pages, it was published in full in the *Missionary Intelligencer*. The limits of this work permit only abstracts:

"Mr. Eldred made a trip to the Bolingo River last October and placed teachers there for the first time. When the evangelists returned from there this last March they reported some people ready for baptism, but they were afraid to come down to the 'Big River'! 'For,' they said, 'it is death, death itself'; so we decided to go up there for a few days."

"We reached the mouth of the Bolingo River at noon and stopped at a fishing camp to cook dinner. All afternoon we went on and on, occasionally stopping to cut a tree or an obstructing limb out of the way. We reached another fishing camp just before dark, so decided to spend the night there. I wish I could describe these camps to you so you could realize what they look like. In low water people go from the towns and build temporary shelters to live in while fishing; in high water these places are under water. This camp had just one shed about thirty feet long; the roof was made of thatch and sloped only one way, the direction in which the rains came.

The sides were open, it was only a roof to keep the rain off. There were five beds built about fifteen inches above the ground, of poles as large as my wrist and each bed was ten or twelve poles wide."

"There are many fallen trees and snags in the river obstructing the way, so we spent about four hours of the next forenoon cutting trees and limbs. At one place Mr. Eldred and his men were in the water waist deep for over two hours cutting trees, some of them under water, to make a passage for our boat. While we were waiting my cook and another boy spied a very poisonous snake high up on the limb of a tree, so they cut a stick for a bow and getting some string and an arrow from Mr. Eldred they shot the snake. When it fell to the ground they quickly despatched it with a knife."

"After we had gone a short distance some people from a fishing camp heard us and when they learned that it was Is'ea Mpela (Mr. Eldred) and his wife, they came running to see us. Two of these men insisted on carrying me for some distance, and, as no white woman had ever been in that part of the country before, I was a great curiosity. The path was so bad that the hammock was continually catching on trees and limbs and once my dress got caught and badly torn; once while crossing a swamp which took an hour, one man slipped and dropped the hammock; this caused me to sit down in six inches of water."

"It was about eight o'clock when we came into the village of Bangala and our men called out to the people that the White Man and his wife were coming, so men came running to carry my hammock. By the time we reached the Chief's house a great crowd was around us, for such a visit is very un-

usual, as a White Man is seldom seen in that part of the country and never before a White Woman. We were given a small house to sleep in; it was just a thatched roof with very low eaves and open ends and sides. We were dripping wet and very cold, but there was no place where we could go to change our clothes, so after eating a cold supper, we talked awhile to the people. The house was packed and people were standing around wherever they could get a little space. Finally, we told the people that they must go, for we were very tired and wanted to go to bed. We spread our blankets on the native bamboo bed and tied our mosquito net up, but even then we just had to drive the people away. After putting out the light (burning gum copal) we got under the net and undressed, thankful to be under a roof once more."

"Some of the women asked me why I did not tattoo my face and body and rub with 'ngola' (red paste) as they did, instead of washing with soap and water. This gave me an opportunity to ask why they were not satisfied with the way God made their bodies and why they destroyed them the way they do."

"Here the path is cleared for about ten feet wide, so we did not have the difficulties to encounter that we had the day before. We had to cross one swamp on poles and fallen trees, some places high above the ground, and I almost held my breath for fear one of the men would make a misstep and I would get a bad fall. I breathed easier when at last we were on solid ground again."

"As no white woman and but few white men had ever been seen here, you can imagine that people gathered to see us and to discuss our ways of dress

and everything we did. One of our men said to a native of the village, 'Haven't you anything to do but stand and look at the White Man?' He replied, 'The White Man does not come to see us very often and I am going to look at him all I want to!'"

"Sunday morning our hearts were made glad when seven confessed Christ and were buried with Him in baptism, the first fruits of the work in the Bolingo towns. The Catholics here, as they do everywhere, frighten the people by telling them that when the Engelesa (Protestants) baptize people they put them in the water under a canoe and leave them there for two days, but they added another lie this time and said that their necks would first be cut with a knife. So you see it took some courage for the first ones to step out and be baptized, not knowing just what it might mean. The mother of one of the boys did not go down to the river to witness the baptisms (in the Bolingo River, about half an hour's walk away) but stayed in Bolingo w'angele (West Bolingo) and wailed and cursed, thinking that her boy was being murdered, but when he returned alive and well, she was very happy."

"Once while stopping to pull the canoe over a log, we heard the roar of a waterfall and some distance down found that the natives had built a very strong fence across the river and lined it on the up-river side with watting and leaves, making a real dam with but a small opening for canoes to pass through. The openings in these fences are left for two reasons; one is that canoes may pass through and the other is that they may catch fish in their traps. Here the men were afraid to go through in the canoe, as there was a good bit of a fall and danger of the canoe being overturned, so they looked

to Mr. Eldred with the question, 'What shall we do?' There was no other way, we had to go through. Mr. Eldred cut the opening in the dam some larger, then as the native steersman was afraid to make the shoot, Mr. Eldred landed those of our crew who were afraid and taking the long steering paddle himself, he brought the canoe into the current, now somewhat increased because of the enlarged opening in the dam. It was a moment of tension, one mis-stroke of his paddle meant a capsized canoe, loss of goods, and perhaps some of us drowned, but his aim was straight and sure, for the nose of the canoe truck the centre of the four-foot opening and we shot through into the swirling, roaring waters below. We then picked up the men who had landed above the dam and started on down river. About a fourth of a mile below this, the river, which at this point was deep and but about sixty feet wide, made a sharp turn. The current was strong, and there was a snag in the way. Mr. Eldred, who was still steering, sent the canoe around the snag and we were about to feel easy again when bump! the back part of the canoe struck heavily against a hidden snag; the canoe dipped several inches of water but fortunately righted itself again. I was soaked, but like the others, grabbed one of our cooking pots and began bailing water. I was sitting well forward in the canoe. Mr. Eldred and two of the men were thrown into the river, which was some ten or twelve feet deep. Rising to the surface, he looked for me and seeing me still sitting safe in the canoe, he swam after his helmet and taking it in his teeth soon reached the canoe."

"After six months' work and two visits of the White Man, seven baptisms may seem to be a small

harvest, but there are many others thinking seriously of leaving off the old life with its vices and sins, and they told us that when we came again there would be many people ready for baptism. There are many children and young people there who may become followers of the Christ, but for many, many of them the Gospel has come too late. As we looked into their hopeless faces we thought that Christ had died for them, too, but no one has ever told them before and now it is too late. These people are just a few of Africa's millions who are waiting for the 'good news.'"

"One of the questions we are asked by the natives is this: 'How long had the Good News been known in your country?' and when we tell them how many hundreds of years, they ask, 'Why then did your fathers let our fathers die?' We cannot be held responsible for their not having received the Gospel centuries ago; we are responsible for the spreading of the Gospel in our generation. You at home are just as responsible as are we who are on the field, and your part is as important as ours.

'Tell it again, tell it again,
Earth's glad story repeat o'er and o'er,
Till no one can say of the children of men,
Nobody ever had told me before.'"

VII

THE MEN HE TRAINED

ONE needs only to read the annual reports of Mr. Eldred to realize how successful he was. Even in that year when he had been away from the station so much, when the industrial side of the work required so much attention, and when there were but the two of them for all the duties, his report made in July, 1912, showed that there had been seventy-one baptisms during the year, and that the membership of the Longa church had increased to one hundred and ninety.

He had, however, been having an even more significant kind of success, the kind he mentions in this sentence from that report: "One special feature of the church services has been the preaching by native teachers in the presence of the missionaries, thereby developing the hope of the church—a native ministry."

Few of the missionaries felt as deeply as did he the need for rightly trained native preachers and teachers, to be the leaders of the church. Quietly and modestly he had been training them, and about this time in his career, some of those who had been with him began to show the fruits of their training.

First and foremost of these was Is'ekae. As already noted, he was one of the first men Mr. Eldred trained as a carpenter in his early years at Bolenge, and whom he won also to Christ. Is'ekae's baptism

IS'EKAE AND FAMILY. HE WAS MR. ELDRED'S MOST OUTSTANDING CONVERT

occurred in February, 1906, and soon after that he returned to his own town, near Lotumbe. His return there was the occasion for the first visit of the missionaries to that district, for he had been so faithful a workman and Christian that they felt they ought to see that he reached his town safely. He had suffered from heart trouble for a number of years.

Arriving at Mbala and proceeding to his town Is'ekae suffered much from persecution and loneliness until the evangelist Is'olumbu was located at Lotumbe in November of 1907. Is'ekae helped Is'olumbu in every way possible in starting the work and in June, 1909, he moved to Lotumbe, that he and his family might have spiritual fellowship and that he might aid Is'olumbu in building up the church. The date of his moving to Lotumbe marked the beginning of a new epoch in the life of the Lotumbe church. From that time on its growth was rapid, and when Mr. and Mrs. Smith went to open the station in 1910, they had no wiser counsellor or truer friend than Is'ekae.

When it came time to choose the first officers in the church, Is'ekae was made an elder, and he honoured that office as long as he lived. Then when Mr. and Mrs. Smith went home on furlough and the large work of the station fell upon the shoulders of Messrs. Hobgood and Holder, who had only arrived a few months before, Is'ekae was as father and friend to the young men, and a tower of strength to the church.

With perhaps the single exception of Iso Timothée at Bolenge, Is'ekae came into more real appreciation of the white man's teaching and manner of life than any other of those thus far won. And in spiritual

perception, prayer life, and the Christian graces, he stood second to none.

Therefore, his death in August, 1915, was mourned by all at every station. Of him one may truly say, "He was a good man, and full of the Holy Spirit and of faith."

On his return to Bolenge after his first furlough, Mr. Eldred had taken on a number of young men who wished to learn to be carpenters and sawyers. When he went to Longa they went with him. Many of them learned to read and write after becoming Christians, and became acceptable preachers. But most of them were originally from the High Momboyo, and when Lotumbe became a station, they went there, that they might be nearer their home villages.

Of that group three men deserve special mention. After staying for a time at Lotumbe each of them decided to return to his own village.

Bonkonya went to Iyete, one hundred and sixty miles up the Momboyo beyond Lotumbe, and commenced to preach in his own and the neighbouring villages. Before long converts came to Lotumbe for baptism, and many have been won for Christ in the Iyete district.

Itökö went on one hundred miles farther up river to Bongale, near the Belgian post of Monkoto. There his preaching wrought such regeneration that the Government officer urged him to come and locate nearer the post. This he did later.

Ndemboji's town was up the Lokolo River, at Mbangilombe. In point of numbers won and far-reaching results his work seems to be the largest of the three.

How Mr. Eldred's heart must have glowed with satisfaction when the news of Itökö's work came

down to him; when he baptized some of Bonkonya's converts at Iyete in July of 1912; and when in August, 1913, he saw the hundreds won by Ndemboji!

But these are only a few out of many. Space fails when one would add to this honour roll. One can only mention such men as Basele, whom he left so often in charge at Longa when he had to leave the station; Löngömö, an elder at Lotumbe and a preacher of power; Ngoe, who has been such a help in the school at Longa; and Yoka, Lokoso, Nsömi, Njale, and Bosao, leaders in the Longa church, as well as Nkamonya, Bolingo, and Njoji in the Lotumbe church, or of the many others who had their training under Ray Eldred.

The service of the average Congo missionary is very, very short, and Mr. Eldred's was shorter than that of many. But his work goes on into uncounted years in the lives of those whom he stamped with the "likeness of the King."

> "The world goes on and happiest is he
> Who in such wise views immortality
> That, should he sleep forever in the grave,
> His work goes on and helps the world to save."

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VIII

ALONE WITH HIS DEAD

SORROW soon came to Longa. When the new house, which Mr. Eldred was building for her, lacked only a few weeks of being sufficiently completed so that they might move into it, Mrs. Eldred was taken seriously ill. The writer, who was that year acting as temporary captain of the S. S. "Oregon," stopped at Longa, November first, 1912, with supplies for the station, and found both Mr. and Mrs. Eldred ill. It was evident that he had only a mild attack of fever, for he was up again the following morning. But Mrs. Eldred's illness seemed more serious, and so the captain offered to stay with them until she should be better. But neither of them seemed to think her sickness serious, and insisted that the steamer go on to Lotumbe and Monieka. What a difference it might have made had the danger been apprehended! The "Oregon" could have gone at once to Monieka and Dr. Jaggard could have been at Longa by the fourth. Two weeks later, about four P.M. of the fourteenth, a canoe was met as the steamer was coming down river and was within five hours of Longa, and hastily scrawled notes to Dr. Jaggard and the Captain were handed on board by the worn-out paddlers. Both urged all possible speed, and ended, "I'll do my best, but it is haematuria." As Mrs. Eldred had been near to death the year before with this fever, all were very anxious. The Captain turned the

steamer up-stream immediately and ran into a storm until eight-thirty that night. It was dangerous, for they were running at full speed in the darkness, only lighted by the flashes of lightning, the "Oregon" having no searchlight. The next day the steamer crew did its best, working like demons to get the doctor to their "Mama." Unfortunately, a cargo of more than thirty tons was on board and wood was hard to find in high water time, so it was difficult to make speed against the swift current. At five P.M. the steamer reached Monieka and in fifteen minutes Dr. and Mrs. Jaggard were on board, and once more the "Oregon" was speeding down river. Storms again hindered, one so severe that the steamer was nearly capsized, and it was four P.M. of the sixteenth before Longa was reached, and *too late*. In fact, Mrs. Eldred was dead and buried before the canoe with the letters met the steamer. It was too late, but it is a satisfaction to know that all in human power was done to get the doctor to Mrs. Eldred.

In a letter written to Mrs. A. R. Bourne, Dean of Women in Bethany College, in whose Mission Study Class in Kentucky University his missionary ambitions were crystallized into decision, and who, with her mother, Mrs. Dobyns, had been very close to both Mr. and Mrs. Eldred during all the years, Mr. Eldred gives some details of this Gethsemane of his life:

"Longa, November 13, 1912.

"I'll write you now as I sit by Mrs. Eldred's bedside, so you will know how we do here at Longa, though I have no encouraging news to write. I myself have been well and am so at present. However, Mrs. Eldred has been and still is very ill. Since

nearly four weeks ago she has been in bed most of the time. She was up a little after the first week in bed, then got a little worse and has been in bed since. We were getting on as well as we could by ourselves, and with Mrs. Eldred some little better, till this morning at nine, when she had a congestive chill. Her heart was so weak I could scarcely find any pulse beats. Her hands and feet were unusually cold and her hands, feet, and lips were blue with blood that did not circulate. These were also numb and her tongue was so numb she could hardly speak to me. I worked over her for fully an hour and finally succeeded, with Heaven's blessing, in bringing her out of the chill. Then shortly after her symptoms showed that it was haematuria pure and simple. I have already sent a swift canoe with seven of my best men to Monieka with orders not to rest day nor night till they get my letter to Mr. Hensey and Dr. Jaggard asking them to come with all speed. Mr. Hensey is at Monieka with the S. S. 'Oregon.' It will take my men three and a half days, the very best they can do, as Monieka is one hundred and twenty-five miles *up* river. As I have had much experience with sickness out here and with Mrs. Eldred resting much better now at noon, we have a good bit of hope for her."

"November 15th.

"It is with a heavy heart that I sit down to finish this letter to you, for yesterday at about one P.M. I buried my own dear wife and companion. I had written the first part of this letter with pen, but have copied it here as it leads up to what follows. Mrs. Eldred rested very easily till some time after noon when she became delirious at times and by

six P.M. was so most of the time. By half past ten she no longer knew me. From then on I felt sure that she would soon leave me and at eleven fifteen she passed quietly out to be with her Master. Some fifteen minutes before she died she seemed to recognize some unseen presence and for nearly ten minutes was continually reaching out her hands as if to welcome and lay hold of it.

"It was indeed an hour for trial for me, alone with my dear dead. To be sure there were a few of the native Christians whom I allowed to be present. I say allowed, for if I had not forbidden it there would have been a mob of curious ones jammed into the room. Even the strongest of the Christians present gave way more or less, when the end came, to their old custom of weeping. I had not only to control myself but also these children of our Master. Then the body had to be prepared for burial before it should get cold and stiff. This I had to do myself, with the aid of two of the native Christian women. Then, leaving some of the Christians to remain near the body, I went to seek a bit of needed rest and sleep. At daylight I sent a note to the white traders at Longa announcing the time of the funeral services, and also to the State Post ten miles away to our friends, the Government officer and his wife. And by chance one of the trading steamers had come along and stopped at Longa late the night before and the Captain, who is friendly to us, on hearing of Mrs. Eldred's death, came and offered to help me by making the coffin. For this, his kindness, I was and am very thankful. I had all I could do besides. The native Christians kindly dug the grave with a little direction from me. There were six white people present at the funeral besides myself, and as but two

of these could understand English, while all knew French, it was necessary for me to hold part of the service in French, while the rest was in the native tongue. One of the evangelists gave a short sermon in Lonkundo and others offered prayers. The rest of the service I had to take myself. The State officer and his wife were very kind to me and among other things the officer brought a guard of soldiers to march as a guard of honour for the coffin from the house to the church and later to the grave; then at the grave they gave the military salute. Also, the officer and his wife stayed awhile after the others had gone, which was good of them, especially as they were Catholics, for I was so lonely. I forgot to say that the last thing Mrs. Eldred said that I could make out was about the children. Dear friends, it is needless to say that I am broken-hearted and lonely, but blame me not for weeping, for I have three little motherless boys ten thousand miles away. However, the Lord has stood by me thus far and He will not fail me now in this my hour of trial and need. Mrs. Eldred was not afraid to die and said while sick that if it were not for the boys she would gladly die and be at rest. For her the last few years were full of sicknesses and much pain, but now she is free from all these and is at rest in the Presence of her Master. She was an excellent wife, a very loving mother and a true companion. She dearly loved the Master's work and proved it by giving her life that others might be redeemed."

A postscript added to the letter gives another glimpse:

"I wish you could have seen the beautiful flowers I had for Mrs. Eldred's burial. I put some oleander blossoms in her hair, a beautiful bouquet in her hand

and strewed the coffin along both sides of her body with flowers, and placed a large bouquet at her feet."

The boys had been the last conscious thought of their dying mother and to them he wrote of her death in tender sentences:

"Longa, November 23, 1912.

"Auntie Adams will read to you all the letters Papa has written about the way your own dear Mother was so sick and then went to be with God and Jesus up in Heaven. Mamma was sick for about a week, then she was a little better and we were so glad, for we wanted her to get strong and well again, but after a day or so Mamma was not so strong and well and had to go to bed again. Then she was sick in bed for nearly three weeks. The last week she was so very sick part of the time. And just to think that the doctor was ever so far away, a good deal farther than Cleveland, and there are no hacks going and no trains for one to come on and no telephone so Papa could send word. Papa gave Mamma medicine, but she was too sick, so the medicine could not make her well. Then she got so sick that she could hardly talk to Papa. Then I think she wanted to tell Papa something about you boys, but was so sick she could not do it very well. Then at last I think she must have seen Jesus or the angels coming for her, as she kept looking and looking and held out her hands to welcome them and tried to talk, but could not, for she was very sick and weak. Then Mamma lay very still and quiet. Just as quiet as if she was asleep. Papa was right there all of the time watching her, then after awhile Mamma looked around a little and Papa thought she tried to

say something. Then she just went quietly to sleep and did not waken any more. Papa felt so badly that he had to cry then and he has cried a good many times since.

"While Mamma was so sick there were some of the Christian natives there and they brought Papa everything that he wanted so he did not have to leave her at all. Then after she was dead, two of the native women of the church helped Papa and we got Mamma's very pretty white dress with small blue dots in it and we put this on her, so she could be buried in a pretty dress. Papa put on her pretty red slippers that she liked so well. And Papa combed her pretty long hair and braided it up nicely. Papa cut off a nice lock of Mamma's hair so that all three of you boys can have a good lock of your mother's hair when Papa comes home.

"We have no neighbours close by as you have there. There are two men who live as far away or farther than clear across all of Hiram. Papa sent word to them that Mamma was dead and also to a man and his wife a long ways off—more than twice as far as Garrettsville. Then a steamer came along and stopped. The Captain is a good man and he made the coffin to help Papa. There were six white people at the funeral besides Papa. None of these people was a minister or anything of the kind, so Papa had to hold Mamma's funeral himself. It made me feel so bad. Then Papa could not hold the funeral service in English, for some of those there could not understand it, so Papa had to speak in their language so they could understand. We had lots of pretty flowers on Mamma's coffin and put some pretty blossoms in her hair and a pretty bouquet in her hand. Don't you all think that was nice?

Papa took two pictures of Mamma and if they are good some day you each will have one to keep. We buried your Mother out by the church here and when the ground gets settled Papa will build a nice brick fence around the grave.

"So now, my dear boys, we will not see Mamma again here in this world, but when we get to Heaven we will see her and will find that she is so happy, for now she can be with Jesus. You all must try to be good boys so Jesus will come for us some day."

As soon as the news reached the headquarters of the Society at Cincinnati, they cabled back condolences, assured him of reinforcements, and urged him to go to Bolenge for a rest and change until other workers could come to Longa. It was thought that the loneliness of the distant station, under such circumstances, would be too much for him. His answer was characteristic: "How can I leave my people? I am their teacher and they need me. I will stay at Longa until the workers come. As I toil for those whom I love, God will lift the burden of loneliness from my heart."

This heroic decision made a deep impression upon the Executive Committee of the Foreign Society and President McLean was requested to write him a letter of appreciation of his desire to remain at Longa until the arrival of other missionaries.

The words of his friend, J. B. Hunley, seem very appropriate here:

"Again we see them at Longa. It is the midnight hour. The strong man is bowed low by the side of her whose life is fast going. No physician to stanch the ebbing tide of life; no nurse with ready appli-

ances and tender hands to give assistance; no friends to comfort the husband's aching heart. He faces the crisis alone. He drinks the bitter cup. It must have been the unseen Messenger who came to waft the spirit of the dying woman home, administered, as once in Gethsemane, strength to this lonely, suffering man. Aye, God Himself was there and gave the garland for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. For when, with his own hands, he had prepared the body for burial and said the last sad words over that solitary grave, he turned, like John G. Paton and David Livingstone, to face the task alone without wavering. In the thought of such a scene we cry out our unworthiness before God and pray that this heroic example may stir us to more sacrificial service."

When the news of the heroic struggle of the men in the canoe to reach Monieka or meet the steamer was published, Miss Adelaide Gail Frost, of India, wrote the following poem:

"FLOW ON, O CONGO.

Flow on, O Congo, to the sea,
You bore her hence from waters strange to your far land,
You bore her from her western home, her children dear,
You left her by your tropic strand,
Row, ebon hands upon the oar,
Row, 'gainst the river current's mighty way,
Though muscles strain and drops stand on your brow,
You cannot bear her help today!

Flow on, O mighty river, flow,
As centuries you between your peopled banks have flowed,

Where you alone have heard the cries that no man
recked,
Where no man thought upon your dusky ranks be-
stowed,
Row, men of Longa, row,
Row for the foreign doctor o'er dividing space,
Ah, though you row as no man rowed before,
You cannot reach her place!

Flow on, O river, she heeds not
As when her quivering heart knew that a tide of woe
Surged 'round her, knew and in her gentle womanhood
Dared still to deeply know,
Row, men of stalwart frame,
Bend to your task so speed you may as ne'er you sped
before—
She came to help you o'er great oceans wide and deep.
She needed help, but needs no more.

Flow on, great Congo, flow,
Your crowding people will wait long for accents mild
In tongues they understand, to pass her lips
And hush their ravings wild,
Row as of old, dark men,
Slow, if you please, with lagging dip of oar,
It matters not to her—too late you come—
She moans not as before.

Sound voice of wind and wave,
And let your sobs on Christian shores not cease,
Sound out abroad and call to those unheeding there,
In bright free lands of peace.
Sound with a strong, deep cry,
Call skill of hand and mind and rich, brave souls
That never more shall need in vain our own who toil
Where the wide Congo rolls.

Boom on our shores, O ocean waves,
Hush not the cry of Afric's need,
Till never more our few shall toil and die alone—
Oh, moan and cry until we heed!
Leap up, O waters, leap,
And voice the sob of Afric's own who mourn aloud,
Who weep to see their Teacher bracing still to bear,
And still beneath its load low bowed.

Hush not, O voices, never cease,
Until help speeds that never, never it shall be
That one must stand alone beside his dearest, see her die,
With no physician at his door.
Beat on, O ocean waves, beat on,
Sob if ye will and moan, ye winds, from that far shore—
We have been very deaf and slow to hear your cry,
And one has need of us no more."

In a letter to Mrs. M. D. Adams, at Hiram College, in whose care the boys were, Mr. Eldred wrote these words of unwavering trust:

"I am indeed very heavy-hearted and feel very keenly for my dear boys, but I know that the good Lord has reasons for calling my dear companion unto Himself, and I know He will help us in caring for my dear boys. I will miss Mrs. Eldred more than I can tell, yet I shall strive to labour on alone, with His help, for 'I know in whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day.' Her body sleeps out here by the church, but she herself is clothed with that glorious body and can be in the presence of the Lord whom she dearly loved, and I can truly say, 'Thanks be unto God who giveth us the victory through Jesus Christ our Lord.'"

Mrs. Adams wrote him a letter which was of much comfort to the sorrowing husband, for it told him so much of the children. Part of that letter follows:

"Ever since the terrible word reached us I have been trying to write to you, but each time I attempted a letter I failed. It seems so heartbreaking that I wonder what I can say to you, who are braving al-

most alone the entire burden of sorrow, so far as human aid is concerned. The shock was very great to me, as I had really never felt but that you two brave-hearted soldiers for Christ would be permitted to come back together to your beautiful boys. They had talked of it so often, 'When Papa and Mamma come home and we go back to South Bend.' Now they say, 'When Papa comes back—Mamma can't come, for she is living with God.' Dear Brother, you must for the sake of these darling boys be brave. They are just as happy as three little boys can possibly be, and have been ever since you left them two years ago, but Papa and Mamma are very real factors in their lives and while they have never grieved a moment, still, implanted in their little hearts has been the thought that Papa and Mamma would come back in four years. I did not try to make them understand the awful loss they have sustained. I told them that God had taken Mamma to live with Him and that it was very sad and lonely for poor Papa out in Africa without dear Mamma and that they must not only pray oftener for Papa, but they must try very hard to be good boys, for this would help Papa. Dear Brother, I can never tell you what grand little men these boys are. They are so handsome, so fine in every way. Ray is growing into a manly boy. He is tall and slender like you, has your hand and foot exactly and in every way except complexion and eyes reminds us of you. Ward is very beautiful and very intellectual-looking, but so very full of mischief and the keenest sense of humour. Joseph is the handsomest of the three, and not one whit behind the others in any way. They are all certainly the most lovable children I ever saw."

The sad duty fell to the writer on the Lord's Day, November seventeenth, to conduct the Memorial Service for Mrs. Eldred. The message was from the first three verses of the third chapter of I John. How little any of those present that day dreamed that in less than a year the same voice would be speaking within those same walls in memory of another who had given all to help pay "The Price of Africa!"

Many, many friends of the homeland wrote Mr. Eldred letters of appreciation for Mrs. Eldred and of comfort for him. All those letters he prized and they were found later carefully filed away.

Among them was one from their friend for many years, Charles S. Medbury, of Des Moines. His letter contained this passage, which sums up in a beautiful way all that might be said of the sacrifice of Mrs. Eldred for the land and the people she loved:

"It seems to me that dear Sister Eldred's going away will surely influence *tremendously* the lives of the native converts. As the graves multiply there, *each a loving and a longing appeal,* surely they for whom these lives are given will be more and more inclined to believe in Him, the love of whom sends forth to Africa such spirits as our sacred mission includes."

Frail health prevented Mrs. Eldred from doing many things she had hoped to accomplish, and for which her culture of hand and brain and soul made her so efficient. She wrought more and better than she dreamed, but her service was a modest one, judged by the standards she had set in her own

ideals. Yet that service was given in the fullest devotion, counting no cost too great.

"Is it the work that makes life great and true?
Or the true soul that, working as it can,
Does faithfully the task it has to do,
And keepeth faith alike with God and man?"

IX

THAT LONELY YEAR

THE next year was a lonely though busy one for Mr. Eldred. It was also a time of stress and strain in all the mission. At the time of Mrs. Eldred's death there were at Bolenge only three workers, Miss Eck, the writer, and Mrs. Hensey, for the Station and the steamer; at Monieka Dr. and Mrs. Jaggard were alone, while at Lotumbe there were just two young men, H. C. Hobgood and W. R. Holder, who had been but five months on the field, having come out with Mr. Corey. As no one could be spared to go to Longa, it was proposed to give up Lotumbe for the year, the two young men to stay with Mr. Eldred at Longa. But the latter vetoed this, saying that it would not do to give up Lotumbe. So he stayed at Longa, making several journeys to Lotumbe to help the young men. The first of these was made very soon after Mrs. Eldred's passing, and of it he wrote home:

"'If Thy presence be not with us, lead us not up hence.' This was our inward prayer as we left Longa by steel boat for Lotumbe, seventy-five miles away, to aid Messrs. Hobgood and Holder with the work at Lotumbe during the incoming of the native evangelists this December. We left Longa at three P.M., on Sunday, December first, and traveled to the Government Post of Ingende, ten miles up river, where we stayed the night. We were up and started

on again by five A.M. Monday morning, travelling some miles by moonlight. Fortunately, it was not one of our very hot days. My native Christian paddlers and I had the doubtful pleasure of being caught in one of Congo's typical tornadoes about nine A.M. With the river very high, extending far out over its banks, back into the forest and jungle, there was no place for a possible landing. We must stay in our small boat. The wind and rain beat fiercely, making it impossible to paddle the boat, so we shoved it into the edge of the thick brush a few feet, where we had to sit and let it rain. As there is no covering on the boat my men had to sit and be drenched with the torrents of rain. I had a piece of tarred cloth, none too large, which I held over myself so as to keep off most of the rain. We had to hang on to the bushes to keep the boat from being carried away by the wind and current. This lasted about an hour. After the storm we pressed on and by sundown reached the village of Bosa, far over half way to Lotumbe. It was a record day's paddling. My men were very tired, but I told them it might be possible to reach Lotumbe the next day. We were started the next morning again by five A.M., and although the men were lame from the day before they bent to their paddles nobly and to my joy they put the nose of the boat against the Lotumbe beach at 1:30 that day, Tuesday, thus making the journey in two days.

"At Lotumbe we found the brethren well and busy. Part of the evangelists were already in from their posts and the others came later. Such meetings! I knew well of the size of the Lotumbe work, but it was inspiring to see and to help with it. Many, many Christians came into Lotumbe with the evangelists, as well as about a hundred and forty in-

quirers seeking further teaching and baptism. Sunday, the eighth, the church was more than filled and many were seated on boards and poles thrown in the aisles. This congested condition made us think again of their need of a larger church, so it was agreed to use the large number of boys at Lotumbe and the visitors to enlarge the church. We did not make the record of a church in a day, as is done at home, but we did build the church enough larger to seat two hundred additional people, in a week. At home the builders who put up a church in a day have the material on the ground before that day. Here the idea was conceived at the morning service on Sunday and all material gathered from the forest and swamp and the house built and seats all in by Saturday. And it was well that we did, for Sunday the fifteenth was a great day. The Sunday School was the largest yet known at Lotumbe, there being four hundred and forty-eight present. The church building, even after being enlarged, was filled and again some were compelled to sit on boards on the ground, at the morning service. This church building was but part of the work that week, as I conducted two and three services each day, besides helping in other ways. Brethren Holder and Hobgood conducted two different schools each day and looked after the general mission work.

"On Sunday afternoon the two brethren and myself, assisted by the two ordained deacons of the Lotumbe church, had the pleasure of baptizing one hundred and five people into Christ."

On his return to Longa Mr. Eldred moved his household goods into the new house. How full of memories that task must have been! Each piece of furniture was placed just where Mrs. Eldred would

have wished it to be; the familiar articles of her household life he arranged just as if she yet dwelt at Longa; in the yard he planted the flowers and shrubs she had loved; he even hung some of her garments in the wardrobe he had made under her directions.

It was the sad duty of the writer to go through Mr. Eldred's Mission and private papers, in order to determine what should be saved, and in the preparation of this memorial it has been given to him to read many of his most intimate, personal letters. Sometimes it has seemed almost as if he trod on too holy ground, especially when the letters speak of and to the one whom he had "loved long since and lost awhile." Seldom indeed have husband and wife been so welded together in affection as were these two, and as one reads the letters of that last year, the conviction deepens that the coming tragedy was due almost as much to its days of sorrowing loneliness, as to the cold swift waters of the Lokolo.

Mr. Eldred was of the Puritan type and had schooled himself to bear sorrow without murmuring. And because of that those who knew most intimately this strong, great-hearted man will never know how he suffered in those days in which he was alone with the spirit of his Dear Dead ever about him. One of the missionaries was visiting him in this period, and was awakened in the night by an unusual sound. Listening he heard heart-breaking sobbing—sobbing such as comes only from the overburdened heart of a strong man.

But if, as Father Felician is represented as saying to Evangeline,

> "Sorrow and silence are strong, and patient endurance is godlike,"

it is not surprising that his colleagues should, in these times of his bereavement, come to have a deeper appreciation of Mr. Eldred and to realize, as never before, in how wonderful a manner tenderness was linked in him with strength. More than one of them looks back now with a sense of deep privilege to a short exploring trip in the Lomela River in January of 1913. Mr. Eldred, with all the missionaries then on the field, went on this trip, and somehow one seemed to sense some sides of his nature which before had been hidden.

Nor is it to be wondered at that in such a time he should write some letters much to be prized. Among many such is one which he addressed to President McLean:

"Longa, February 8, 1913.

"Your good letter of sympathy and comfort has just reached me and I wish very much to thank you for your love and prayers in my behalf during the darkest period my life has yet known. However, I am happy to be able to say that I was sustained by the all-wise Father's love and care and was able to believe, in the darkest moments and deepest grief, that it was the Father's will and would be for the best. Of course I am lonely here at Longa, all alone, and shall continue to pray that soon some one may be found to come to my aid. Again I wish to thank you for your interest and prayers. I am as well as usual, having had no fevers now for some time.

"The work is moving on in good shape, though I cannot give the time needed to any one department. And, also, having to help the young brethren at Lotumbe, takes time away from Longa. However, I

am glad to be able to go to their aid when they need me. I expect to go to Lotumbe again at this March incoming of their evangelists, to help with the extra work at that time. Then I will return to Longa in time for the incoming of our evangelists. It is too early to forecast what the results of these ingatherings will be, but we are looking, working, and praying for many to be added to the Lord at these times. This will be the last class of baptisms for this year. The number for the whole mission so far is already large and this year we will report a larger number than last. The Lord's work at Longa is growing and *while the price of Congo's redemption is being paid, this time by my own dear wife laying her life on the altar of her Master, may the churches at home not think it too costly, and may others be found who will help to garner in the sheaves."*

Mr. Eldred was many times Secretary, Treasurer, and Legal Representative of the Congo Mission. As Secretary for that year he wrote the following introduction to the annual report of the mission for 1912-1913, which was not printed until his hand was still in death. In this the same spirit may be observed.

"With prayers for a spirit of humility and with mingled joy and sadness do the Congo workers submit herewith their report of what the Lord hath wrought through them the past year. With joy, because in every department the work has made substantial increase over last year, thus making it the banner year yet known to the Congo Mission. With joy, because the growth of the churches has been encouraging and the number of baptisms far beyond

our faith at the beginning of the year. With joy, because of the increased recognition at the hands of the Government, thereby giving us a more equal ground on which to contest against the arch-enemy, Romanism. With sadness, because of the loss by death, on November thirteenth, 1912, of one of our faithful workers, Mrs. R. Ray Eldred; yet with joy, because of the strength and consolation from on high given him whose special portion it was to drink deeply and in solitude of the bitter waters of life.

"There have been 1,304 baptized this year, as against 901 last year and 563 two years ago. The present membership at all the stations is 3,051. The work has been richly blessed with fruits for the Master, despite the still great shortage of workers."

Meanwhile many prayers had been going up for the Congo Mission, and for Mr. Eldred in his loneliness; and better days began to dawn. Mr. and Mrs. Moon shortened their furlough and hastened back. Mr. Hedges, who had married during his furlough, hurried back at the same time, bringing his bride. Miss Edith Apperson came with them. The arrival of these reinforcements in June of that year enabled Mr. Hobgood to be placed at Longa to help, for a time, in the work there, while Dr. W. A. Frymire and Mr. and Mrs. E. A. Johnston were announced to arrive in September, the two latter to be located permanently with Mr. Eldred. These workers, new and old, arrived in Congo just at the time for the Annual Conference, which was held at Longa. What a fellowship it was! What clear-sighted plans were laid! And how few of them were ever to be carried out!

It would seem that Mr. Eldred would, by this time, be content to settle down quietly at Longa, but not so. And the reason is not hard to discover.

A glance back over the years of his service in Africa makes it plain that the one outstanding element in his missionary makeup was his passion for taking the Good News to those who had never heard. His heart heard only one clear call—the need of those who know not Jesus Christ. Such a heart is the very hall-mark of the true missionary, but his was so sensitive to that call that often the thought of the millions dying "in darkness and in the shadow of death" settled down upon him like an oppressive burden.

One day when Mr. Eldred was itinerating in the High Momboyo region, going through many villages where the gospel had never been heard, he and his carriers came to a fork in the forest path. Their guide started to take the left-hand path, but Mr. Eldred asked, "Where does the right-hand path lead?" "That leads to nothing but a Bacwa village," replied the guide, who was an Nkundo. The antipathy of the Bankundo for the Bacwa has already been noted in these pages, so the guide and the carriers tried to persuade the white men not to go to that village, but the heart of Mr. Eldred yearned for those despised dwarf people. When the caravan neared the Bacwa village, nestling in an obscure part of the forest, its diminutive inhabitants became frightened and disappeared in the jungle. The whole caravan commenced to search in the miserable grass and leaf huts, if perchance a few Bacwa people might have hidden there, and one of the party, noting something shining in the far corner of one hut, found it to be the spear of a tiny warrior. He was crouching

there, evidently determined to sell his life as dearly as possible. Mr. Eldred came and spoke to the dwarf, greeting him in the Lonkundo tongue, which all the Bacwas understand. But no response came until Mr. Eldred told him that he need not be afraid, for they had come to tell him of Jesus Christ. Wonder of wonders, the Saviour's name was as a magic key! The little warrior dropped his spear and crawled out of the hut, when it became apparent why he had not fled with the other villagers, for he was a cripple. He proved to be the chief of the village, and limping out into the open, sounded a weird, peculiar whistle. That, too, seemed to have magic in it, for at once there seemed to step from behind every tree and bush one of the Bacwa villagers. At the word of their chief they seated themselves in a group around him on the ground, and Mr. Eldred told them, over and over again, the sweet, glad story of the love of the Father and the gift of His Son. How they did listen!

Then it was necessary that the caravan move on, so they said good-bye to the crippled chief. But he clung to them, urging the white teachers to stay in his village and teach them of Jesus, promising to build them a house. Mr. Eldred told him of the necessity for their departure, but promised to return or to send another teacher. Then the little chief's face became sad, and he said, "No, if you go away, we'll never have another opportunity for salvation. No one ever has cared for the Bacwa, and no one ever will!"

It was imperative that the journey be continued, but the words of the chief settled down like a pall of gloom upon Mr. Eldred's heart, and he was depressed in spirit for the rest of the itinerary.

When one remembers this zeal and passion of Ray Eldred for the "regions beyond," it is not surprising that at this time, in spite of the ravages toil and exposure and sorrow had made upon his strength, he should pay little attention to the entreaties of his colleagues that he go to the homeland for a rest. At least one of them wrote to him, proposing that Mr. Eldred take his furlough earlier than it was due, and offering to stay over time to make that possible, but to no avail. Mr. Eldred in reply expressed his gratitude for the proposal, but insisted on staying until his furlough was due.

Instead of thinking of going on furlough, hardly had Mr. Hobgood joined him at Longa, when Mr. Eldred commenced to plan a longer itineration than he had ever made. It was to be one of ten weeks, in the Longa and Lotumbe fields, largely to districts never before visited by the missionaries—an itinerary badly needed, to say the least. After some consultation, it was arranged that he and Mr. Hobgood start the last of July.

Among other duties which had to be looked after before they could start on such a journey was the sending in to the Society of the Annual Report, the introduction to which has already been quoted in this chapter. His report for Longa station is of more than passing interest, for it proved to be his last one. His opening sentence was: "Perhaps slowly, yet surely, the Longa church is advancing to higher ideals, as is evidenced by the growth of the past year."

Then he went on to enumerate some of the signs of progress. One hundred and nine people had been baptized. The active membership was two hundred and sixty-eight. The elders and deacons had been

very faithful. The offerings of the church showed a marked increase, amounting to $142.15. The Christian women, after Mrs. Eldred's death, carried on their own meetings. He mentions also some special work:

"A feature of the woman's work carried on this year has been that for refugee women. Since the change to a Belgian colony, the Colonial officers have been cautiously working to reduce polygamy among the non-Christian natives. Any polygamous wife is free to leave her husband and owner and go to live wherever she may please with another man, provided he has no wife; in her own village, remaining single; or at any mission station she may choose. In case she remains single, the polygamous husband receives nothing in return for the price he paid for her. If she be married to another man, he must pay an average price to the former husband. During the past year fifteen wives of polygamous husbands have sought and found refuge at Longa mission. These women, mostly young or middle-aged, work about the station, dressing the paths and working in the cane and banana plantations. They receive small pay, lest this should become an incentive for their coming to the station. Nearly all of them become Christians. Several of these women have been married to Christian young men, in each case the young man paying the average price, which, in this region, is ten dollars. In no case is one of them married till after she becomes a Christian."

Mr. Eldred's medical services had been much in demand during the year.

"There were 5,670 treatments from the station dispensary. A number of white traders and Government officers received medical aid, several of whom

were nursed through serious illnesses, including rigors due to sun-fever, bilious fever, abscess of the liver, and blood poisoning. The receipts for medical fees were 479.00 francs, or $95.80."

Mr. Eldred also regards the work of the Day School as having been especially good during the year.

"Special mention should be made here of Ngoe, who has had charge of the day school in Lonkundo, and who, with two other paid teachers, has rendered valuable service in carrying on the school during Mr. Eldred's absence. The French school has been carried on all the year, excepting when Mr. Eldred was absent from Longa and for a short period following Mrs. Eldred's death."

One would not expect much in the Industrial part of the work, but he notes a number of things which have been accomplished, and concludes:

"Forty-five thousand brick have been made and dried, making sixty thousand ready to be burned. These brick are for the new Longa church, which is the main feature of Longa's building programme for the coming year."

Under date of July fifteenth, Mr. Eldred wrote to Secretary S. J. Corey what seems to have been the last letter he addressed to the headquarters of the Society. The closing part of that letter read:

"In about a week Mr. Hobgood and I are to start our itineration. We are to go from Longa to Lotumbe overland. Then we will start from Lotumbe to visit the country above there and in the Lokolo district, coming out on the Momboyo River about fifty miles above Besao, where you and I were. After that we are to go on up the Momboyo some fifty miles further, where we have a very promising work. Then we are to come down river overland as

far as Waka, returning finally to Lotumbe and Longa by canoe. The journey in all will take us over about seven hundred miles on land, and more than two hundred by river, and is to occupy some two and a half months.

"I will try to write you occasionally on the way. This trip will likely be the longest of its kind ever made by any of us. You know something of the roads out here, and we will see even worse ones than usual on this journey. We are to take the stereopticon and some medicines, as we want to do all the good we can.

"This is not to be a forced march, for we want to reach the people. Also we want to keep well. Do not worry about us, for the Father, who has always been with us, will be with us ALL the way."

X

THE LAST JOURNEY

THE month of July was devoted largely to preparations for the coming itinerary. All being ready, Mr. Eldred and Mr. Hobgood left Longa on July twenty-eighth.

After Mr. Eldred's passing the officers of the Longa church told the writer somewhat of that parting with the church. During the days in which preparations were being made for this long journey on which he laid down his life, it seemed that there were many vexing things in the native church. These are to be expected in a membership so recently out of heathenism, for the problems discussed in such Epistles as the Corinthian letters are the common problems of Mission lands, but for some reason there seemed to be in this Longa church during this period an unusual amount of stumbling, trouble, and bitterness. This so saddened the heart of their missionary pastor that on the morning set for departure, Mr. Eldred seemed "bound in the Spirit." Therefore, he called the church together and admonished them with many tears, concluding by speaking especially to the deacons:

"I am going away on a ten weeks' journey, and I am not as strong as I used to be. I do not know whether or not we will meet again on earth. Take good care of the Church of Jesus Christ." Then like Paul, at Miletus, he prayed for them all, and

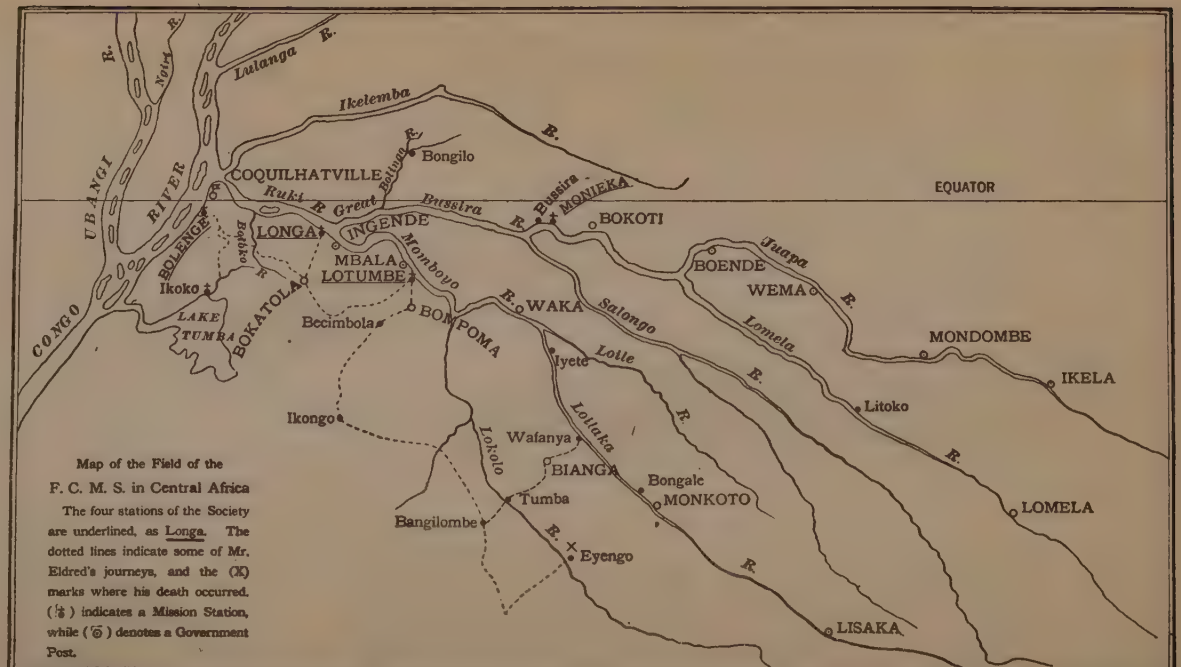
strode away into the forest, leaving them sorrowing most of all for his parting words.

The thirteen days' journey overland from Longa to Lotumbe was made safely, though Mr. Eldred was far from well, and had to be carried part of the time.

A few days were spent at Lotumbe, resting, for some slight hemorrhages had weakened Mr. Eldred's strength. Letters were written to home folks, among them one by Mr. Eldred to his sons. Mr. Eldred preached at the Lord's Day services in the Lotumbe church and many who were present that day remember his speaking with unusual power and unction. During this brief rest at Lotumbe, the writer saw his colleague for the last time.

Bright and early on the morning of August fifteenth, Messrs. Eldred and Hobgood started with their caravan for the Lokolo district of the Lotumbe field. This was the longer lap of their itinerary. Passing through the intervening villages, they reached the large centre of Mbangilombe, where lived Elaji, the paramount chief of the district. At this place a marvellous work of grace was being wrought, and Elaji, who had formerly opposed the work and torn down the church building, was an inquirer. He had put away all but one of his fifty wives and was baptized on this trip. Then they went on to Tumba, on the banks of the Lokolo, where the district evangelist, Ndemboji, already mentioned as one of Mr. Eldred's students, was located. From Tumba as a centre the missionaries decided to itinerate in many of the Imoma villages.

In all the villages, and especially at these two centres, the Gospel was preached and the converts confirmed in the faith. Mr. Eldred's visit made an impression upon that district which years will not



MAP OF THE FIELD OCCUPIED BY THE FOREIGN CHRISTIAN MISSIONARY SOCIETY IN CONGO BELGE

efface, and strengthened the work both in its appeal and in its dignity.

At Mbangilombe some natives from the village of Eyengo heard Mr. Eldred preach and asked him to come and tell this Good News in their village also, so he promised to visit them.

Thus it came about that, near noon on September third, the two missionaries came by a very bad path, through nearly a mile of black muck and swamp, to the Lokolo River, intending to cross and preach in this village of Eyengo. They found that Eyengo was about a half hour's walk back from the river on the other side, and no canoes or villages in sight. Repeated shouts brought no response, so some of the carriers and servants swam across to look for a canoe. As the missionaries watched their helpers swimming across, it came to them that they could do likewise, and avoid a long wait. Both felt confident that they could easily swim across, the only question was whether or not they were too warm from their hard journey in the heat of the day. But they concluded that they had cooled off sufficiently while waiting, so decided to swim across.

Perhaps some will feel that the two missionaries took too great a risk in attempting to swim across the Lokolo. But all journeys in such a land involve danger. As already noted, Mr. Eldred had promised to preach to the people of Eyengo. He did not know but that he might have to wait several hours for a canoe. And it must be remembered that both men were expert swimmers. If Mr. Eldred had been in his former health and strength, to swim across such a river would have been only play for him. On numerous occasions he had rescued natives from drowning, and on those occasions it had been neces-

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sary to swim much farther than the distance across the Lokolo.

The river at that point is something like one hundred and twenty-five feet wide and very swift. To allow for the current they went up stream about the width of the stream, and then took off some of their clothing.

So they plunged in. They found the water exceptionally cold and the current much swifter and stronger than they had thought. The younger man was the faster swimmer, so was soon some distance ahead. Swimming rapidly but taking pains not to over-exert, he was just getting out of the swift current when he heard Mr. Eldred speak to him in his usual quiet tone. Looking around to hear what his comrade had to say, Mr. Hobgood heard Mr. Eldred repeat, "Hobgood, don't get too far away." There was no sign of fear in face or voice. The younger man hurried back to Mr. Eldred, for the latter was still in the swiftest part of the current. As his young comrade came back to him, Mr. Eldred said, still very quietly, "I expect you had better help me a little." Mr. Hobgood had already caught him under the armpit with his left hand, though this lessened his own swimming power. He saw that Mr. Eldred was still swimming quite strongly, but realized that it would be impossible for him unaided to get his comrade out of the river, should the latter's strength fail. So he called sharply to their native carriers to hurry in and help. One of them, named Bosako, grasped the situation and plunged in, but he had partly dressed after crossing and his clothing entangled him so that he stopped. Mr. Hobgood called more sharply and Bosako came on. When he was still ten feet away, Mr. Hobgood saw Mr.

Eldred's mouth go under and that he drew in a little water. The strength of the younger man was just about gone, and he realized that the only chance was to get Mr. Eldred to Bosako in a hurry, so as they started to sink, he shoved his worn-out comrade forward as hard as he could, drinking in himself a great gulp of water as he did so. Bosako reached Mr. Eldred, but though they were within fifteen feet of the bank, the water was still deep. As Bosako pulled him toward the shore, Mr. Eldred, apparently as his last conscious effort, tried to reach firm footing, but the water was still over his head and he began to sink. Bosako pushed him forward to one of the Longa workmen, who was rushing out to their help, and this man pulled Mr. Eldred to a standing position in shallow water. Mr. Hobgood hurried out and they commenced to do everything in their power to resuscitate Mr. Eldred. As he had never gotten more than six inches under water there seemed ground for hope. Mr. Hobgood tried first of all to force out the water from the lungs, then to start artificial respiration. He was only able to get out about a teaspoonful of water, but after half an hour succeeded in starting artificial respiration. When they had respiration started Mr. Hobgood thought they would succeed in restoring his comrade to consciousness. With the help of the native workmen and carriers, artificial respiration was kept up for two hours, praying all the time for help from on high. But Mr. Eldred did not regain consciousness and at the end of two hours they gave up and realized that their leader had passed away.

No one will ever know the exact cause of Mr. Eldred's death. Perhaps congestion of the brain, heart-failure, or simply exhaustion. Only in the

sense that he was in the water at the time can it be said that he was drowned. His colleagues knew how tired and worn he was before he started on his last trip. Toils and exposure and many fevers had worn his vitality down to a low ebb. Yet when all has been said, the death of Mrs. Eldred and that lonely year at Longa, added to the years during which he had borne the burden of Africa on his sensitive heart, probably had more to do with his loss of strength than any purely physical cause.

Thus ended the earthly career of this one of God's good men, lacking just three weeks of reaching the span of forty-one years.

The body was wrapped in blankets and placed on a native bed in the canoe, and the sorrowful journey was started down the Lokolo, as it seemed fitting that the interment take place at Tumba. It was indeed a sad and difficult time for Mr. Hobgood, who had at that time been only a little more than a year on the field, and he was nearly prostrated from the shock and strain. They slept that night in the woods, reaching Tumba the next forenoon. Words cannot describe the grief of the Christians at that place when they knew that their beloved " Is'a Mpela " was dead.

The burial and the service that afternoon were alike simple. There were no boards from which a coffin might be fashioned, but loving hands wove together a covering of bamboo. Then into the bosom of the land he had loved and for which he had died was committed all that was mortal of Robert Ray Eldred. His young colleague and Ndemboji, whom he had won and trained, spoke of their loss and of the promise of resurrection through the Son of God.

It seemed imperative to Mr. Hobgood, in spite of his grief, that he stay at Tumba to finish the work

begun. For that decision he merits high commendation, and in it he showed how much he had imbibed of the spirit of the colleague for whom he had so much affection.

Two chosen messengers carried the news overland to Lotumbe. Seven days were required for that journey. As soon as Mr. and Mrs. Hedges realized that which had occurred, a swift canoe was manned to take the news to Longa and Bolenge. On the Lord's Day, September fourteenth, just as the people were coming out of the church at Bolenge men with paddles and letters in their hands were seen coming up the path. The leader called, "Is'a Mpela aobwa nd'ase!" "Mr. Eldred is drowned!" Missionaries and native Christians crowded around, unable to believe it, but Mr. Hobgood's letter showed it was all too true.

The next morning early the writer hurried to the Cable Office at Coquilhatville, sending the news to Cincinnati. As soon as a steamer could be obtained he went to Longa, arriving there on September nineteenth. There he found everything in excellent condition, despite the eight weeks' absence of the missionaries. Ray Eldred had the faculty of binding his workmen to him by strong ties, and they were very devoted to him. He had left the station in charge of a young evangelist named Basele, who proved to be the man for the emergency. As soon as the news of Mr. Eldred's death came, Basele immediately nailed up the windows and doors of the house and store and posted sentries day and night about the station, to avoid any attempt to take advantage of the situation. He also sent a letter to Monieka, which was the first bearer of the sad news to the missionaries there.

AFTERGLOW

IT was sad that night at Longa on the Bussira. For I sat within the brick walls builded by Ray Eldred, and he slept beneath the palms in a lonely village on the banks of the Lokolo, far, far from the grave of his beloved wife, and both their graves so far from where their stalwart boys romped and played at Hiram.

Few more beautiful homes are there on the Upper Congo—and none sadder. How they longed and planned together for that home, which he was to build for her! Hindered by sickness and itineration and toils many, nearly ten years passed by before he could start its building. And then two weeks before the home was near enough completed that they could move into it, Mrs. Eldred fell asleep in Jesus.

And so that night, as I sat at his table and saw all about the familiar objects of their home, and knew that no more on earth our hands should clasp, my heart was very, very heavy. But I knew I must be in some way lifted above this depression, for on the Lord's Day I must somehow keep back my own tears while I should speak to the little church at Longa of all that our leader's life meant to them and to us.

The elders and deacons of that church came in for an informal conference, lingering long as they talked in low tones of the life and passing of their teacher. They talked much of his energy and strength, of his skill, of his love for them, and of his passionate desire to preach to those who had not heard of Jesus, but

the thing which had seemed to impress all of them most was his tender heart and forgiving disposition. They said, "When we forgot, or did wrong, he rebuked us with words which cut our hearts like a sharp knife, but when we showed that we were really penitent, he forgave us and forgot all about it."

Sad are the members of the church at Longa that their beloved teacher is dead; sad also are they that he is buried far away from them and the grave of Mrs. Eldred; sad, O how sad, that their great teacher had to be buried in bamboo mats—he who of all the white men of the Mission had been for ten years the most active and skilful in getting out lumber from the forest and who had taught so many of them how to make boards with a pit-saw. In that country only the great chiefs are buried in wooden coffins, so over and over again the writer heard them say to one another, "We know we could not bring him back again, even if we gave all we have, but if we could only have had the privilege of making him a coffin!"

Few men could be so thoughtful and tender as could Ray Eldred when death came to break the missionary circle, and most of those who await the resurrection beneath the cathedral arches of the palm trees at Bolenge have their sacred ashes contained in coffins made by his skilful hands. But when he fell asleep, out there in the wilderness, there were neither tools nor boards with which the rudest kind of coffin could be made.

The grave is unmarked as yet, though tenderly cared for by the Christians who live at Tumba. It ought never to come to pass that Ray Eldred's last resting place should be covered by tropical jungle, and lost to the memory of man. Over it a shaft should be erected, not only to mark permanently

where were laid tenderly away his earthly remains, but that it may serve to remind the church that it never retreats from the graves of its martyrs. Such a mark is all the more imperative, in that the headquarters for the work in that region have recently been moved from Tumba to Bianga.

One memorial is already in evidence. Among his papers was found the incompleted manuscript of a French-Lonkundo Primer, to be used to teach French in the schools. This was completed by Mrs. Hensey and printed at Bolenge, with the title, "Leçons Élémentaires Français-Lonkundo," and dedicated to the memory of Mr. and Mrs. Eldred.

The Christian Church at Coldwater, Michigan, near where Mr. Eldred was born, hopes to build an "Eldred Memorial Church." When the Quincy church was sold, a part of the proceeds was given by his father to the Coldwater Church for that purpose.

On the Lord's Day, September twenty-first, the writer spoke to the church at Longa of their pastor and teacher, from Hebrews 11:4 and Second Corinthians 4: 10-11. The grief of the Longa Christians was pathetic. They mourn for him as seldom do Bankundo people mourn and well they may, for he was more than a father to them in Christ. Not in a day, nor yet in years, will the sorrow be entirely taken from their hearts.

Some day the inner history of the winning of the Congo will be written—if not here, in the Books to be opened at the last day—and when that history shall be read, the earnest simple deeds of Ray Eldred will be appreciated. Aye, and you need not wait till then to read of some of them, if you but turn to the eleventh chapter of Second Corinthians and realize

that these words are not figures of speech, but records of facts as real in his life as they were in Paul's:

"In labours, more abundantly . . . thrice beaten with rods . . . suffered shipwreck . . . in journeys often, in perils of waters . . . in perils of wilderness, in perils in the sea . . . in labour and travail, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst . . . anxiety for all the churches."

Yet I wonder if his passing was not just as he would himself have chosen? To fall far beyond the loneliest outpost, on his way to villages which had never heard the Good News, that was just the way of entering the Glory Land that suited this hardy soldier of Jesus Christ!

With bared heads, for a leader has fallen, but with hearts strong in faith, all who knew him will feel as does his sister, Mrs. Dobson:

"Twice he bade home friends good-bye and went to the remote regions of Africa and returned to us. The far away seemed not so far since he had come and gone again. The third time, he, with the mother of his boys, bade farewell to parents, sisters, and brothers, and, hardest of all, to the three small sons, and went out to the ripened harvest. And they came not back, nor will they come again. The ten long months following the passing out ahead of his faithful wife, were trying ones to Ray Eldred, as his home letters showed. The letters from home added to his sorrow, as they bore the news of the failing health of his father. In his home letters he said little of this, but the longing for the dear ones at home grew stronger as he realized that his own strength was slowly waning. Two weeks after the sad news of his tragic death had settled like a great shadow over the home, letters were received by each of the family at home

and by the three boys, letters penned by the dear hand that was now still in death. Each letter contained a personal word, like comfort from above. To the sister who was caring for the father and mother at home, he wrote, 'I should like to see you all again, but I cannot come now.' Farther on in the same letter, speaking of his father's illness, he said, 'I may not be permitted to see dear father again. Tell father that I so often think of the many good things he taught me and am so thankful for it.'

"Worn and weary, yet he pushed on to that last long, hard trip, active until the last. Above the shock and sorrow comes the thought, This was the death triumphant. Quietly and calmly he went out as he had lived. It was as if he had chosen it. He had chosen it as a man's work, he gave it a manly service, and in it he met a manly death. To us it was the victor's death, the quiet going out of one who had won the victory over fear through the strength of the conquering Christ."

Among the papers found in Mr. Eldred's portfolio was a letter to his sons, commenced the morning of his last day on earth. He had written only a few lines and then stopped in the middle of a sentence, interrupted probably by some call of need, hoping to finish it that night—but that pathetic little letter was never to be finished.

When the boys at Hiram learned that their father had gone to be with their mother, the eldest asked, "Who will take care of us now?" That question was soon answered.

The news of Ray Eldred's death was announced to the National Convention of the Disciples at Toronto, and while it cast a gloom over the entire gathering, few other events have stirred our people as did

A RECENT PICTURE OF THE ELDRED BOYS

the story of his passing. At the Communion Service the sum of two thousand dollars was given as the beginning of a fund to support his sons, as they were recognized to be wards of the entire brotherhood.

In a prayer meeting in an "upper room" during the Toronto Convention, Mr. John E. Pounds, minister of the Hiram Church, told of the question of the eldest Eldred boy as to who should take care of them now that their father and mother were both gone. In that prayer meeting was Dr. Hugh T. Morrison, of Springfield, Illinois. Later Dr. and Mrs. Morrison asked the privilege of adopting the three children. So in their beautiful home the sons of Ray and Lillian Eldred have found a refuge. To their nurture and education will be given all that love can supply. Surely it is not too much to hope that one, at least, of them will hear the call of the Congo, as his father and mother heard it so clearly, and will follow in their footsteps?

It is understood that Vachael Lindsay, on hearing of the death of Ray Eldred, was moved to write his unique poem, "The Congo," with its beautiful picture of the redemption for which Mr. Eldred laboured and longed.

> "Then along that river, a thousand miles,
> The vine-snared trees fell down in files.
> Pioneer angels cleared the way
> For a Congo paradise, for babes at play,
> For sacred capitals, for temples clean.
> Gone were the skull-faced witch-men lean.
> There where the wild ghost-gods had wailed
> A million boats of the angels sailed
> With oars of silver, and prows of blue,
> And silken pennants that the sun shone through.
> 'Twas a land transfigured, 'twas a new creation."

Friends all over the world wrote of their love for and their obligation to Mr. Eldred. On the Congo

letters came from every Missionary Society, and even the Superior of the Catholic Mission wrote expressing the condolences of their mission in the loss of Mr. Eldred. Government officials and traders united in honouring his memory.

Mr. Holder's letter, written when the news of Mr. Eldred's death reached Monieka, may be taken as a type of the feelings of his colleagues:

"We are sad indeed because of the loss that is ours. But we know Brother Eldred died, as he preferred, busy in his Father's work, and that brings some comfort to our hearts.

"It is sad to think of those little boys, but joyous to think of the reunion of those two heroic souls in the presence of their Lord, unto whom they gave their all.

"We can gain courage to do our part better from such a sacrifice as Mr. and Mrs. Eldred made for the cause of Christ. Let us labour on, keeping the bright reward in view, though many days of our labouring may be dark with such shadows as this. We know our labours in Him are not in vain."

And Ray Eldred's work was not in vain. When he went to the Congo "darkness covered the land and gross darkness its peoples." The Foreign Society had just one station, with property valued at perhaps five thousand dollars. There was no native church. He saw the little church at Bolenge formed and grow strong. He helped to plant the stations at Longa, Lotumbe, and Monieka, and there were over a hundred baptisms his last year at Longa. The latest report shows the membership of these four Congo churches of Christ to be four thousand

six hundred and eighty-three, while over thirteen hundred persons were baptized during the year ending June first, 1915. During the same period the offerings of the native Christians amounted to one thousand two hundred and seventy-three dollars and sixty-seven cents.

The Gospel has been carried by native evangelists far up the rivers and into the interior, and one hundred and fourteen outstations are maintained by the four stations. It is estimated that fully twenty-five thousand people of the jungle villages are hearing the Gospel.

There are now twenty-one missionaries, and the Society owns property, including the S. S. "Oregon," valued at sixty-three thousand five hundred and seventy dollars. Three of the missionaries are physicians, who during the year gave twenty-seven thousand treatments.

The New Testament is being translated into Lonkundo and has been printed up to the end of the book of the Acts. Some of the Epistles and two books of the Old Testament stories have been printed also. A grammar and dictionary of the language have been compiled, and school books prepared.

At Tumba, where Mr. Eldred is buried, Mr. Hobgood baptized one hundred and seventy-eight people a few days after his colleague's death. The next year, itinerating in the district where this man of God laid down his life in sacrificial seed-sowing, Mr. Hobgood baptized over three hundred on the one journey. With Dr. Frymire he visited this same section again in June and July of 1915, baptizing a large number, so that the region through which Mr. Eldred made his last journey is being won for the King. A station at Monkoto or Wafanya is a part

of the plan for further expansion in the High Momboyo.

Figures can tell but a small part of the progress during Ray Eldred's decade of service. In dozens of villages of the children of the Forest the Great Awakening has come, and the transformation begun. The dark filthy bamboo huts are being replaced by neat, airy cottages. The hideous custom of cutting the tribal mark in the flesh and on the faces of little children, paying no attention to their screams of pain, is coming to be a thing of the past. Polygamy is doomed, and the women, whose near-nakedness so shocked all the finer sensibilities of such souls as Mrs. Eldred, are beginning to clothe themselves modestly. The men, whose chief business had been to fight, and to drag their daughters from their mothers' arms to sell them as wives, having learned of Jesus their Saviour, are going to their one-time enemies to give them the Gospel of love and reconciliation. Men, women, and children gather every Lord's Day about the Table of the Lord to remember Him! And it is a far cry from eating human flesh to partaking of the emblems of the Lord's Supper, and discerning in them the body and blood of the Son of God!

The work at Longa is being carried on in energetic fashion by Mr. and Mrs. Charles P. Hedges and Mr. and Mrs. E. A. Johnston.

The men whom Mr. Eldred took as raw savages from the forest villages are evangelists and deacons and elders in the churches at Longa and Lotumbe, and as carpenters and masons and tailors and school teachers, they are helping to solve the industrial as well as the spiritual problems of the Congo.

When he entered the Golden Portals, surely Ray

Eldred bore with him many sheaves garnered from Congo's ripened harvest field. In the men won and trained, "he, being dead, yet speaketh." The multitudes touched by his life reach ever upward toward the better way.

"Were a star quenched on high
For ages would its light,
Still traveling downward from the sky,
Shine on our mortal sight.

"So when a good man dies,
For years beyond our ken,
The light he leaves behind him lies
Upon the paths of men."

Words seem inadequate and futile when one tries to interpret the personality of such a man. To be rightly appreciated Ray Eldred must have been known in a very intimate fashion. He was very reticent about his own spiritual life, and spoke seldom of the deep things of his own soul. But the years revealed to his colleagues the richness of his prayer life, and the closeness of his communion with his Lord. His stern moral rectitude, the purity of his personal life, his unflinching honesty, and his passion for the souls of men—these were written in his character as on the pages of an open book.

He was of the rugged pioneer type and in a large sense belonged to the class of Livingstone and of Grenfell. Ever before his eyes was the vision of the "regions beyond."

Perhaps one may in some small measure sum up his personal character in bearing witness that under all circumstances he was a manly, kindly Christian gentleman, and his work by recalling that he counted no task too insignificant and no sacrifice too great did it mean the winning of Africa's forest children.

True Master Builder was he, not alone of houses made with hands, but of churches and of souls, building with careful hands upon the one foundation. With a faith radiant as the sunrise, his face was set toward the future, and lightened with the enthralling vision of a Redeemed Africa.

Ray Eldred stands out as a striking example of what an average man may become and do, if he yield his soul entirely to God. Lacking somewhat in early educational advantages, more than usually backward and modest, and with no aptitude for public speaking, his youth gave little promise of future distinction in the ministry. Had he remained in his homeland, it is not likely that he would have been more than an average preacher. But he yielded up his soul in full surrender to his "heavenly vision," and in the doing of the task to which the Master called him, his soul was overwrought. When he came home on his first furlough all his friends noted how he had grown. By the time he came home again, it was evident to all that he had outgrown himself. His timidity was gone. The flash of his eye manifested that his soul had been set on fire. As he pleaded for Congo's millions his words glowed with the eloquence of a prophet. In the magnitude of the work to which Ray Eldred had been called, the average man had been transformed into the great man.

His passing reminds us that the Price of Africa continues to be paid. On every Mission Station, and even out in the lonely forests, one beholds palm-arched abbeys, where rude crosses bear eloquent testimony that somehow in the programme of God that land of suffering and sin can only be redeemed by the giving of life. Not entirely do we understand,

but we know that brave hearts such as his are

" . . . . immortal seeds
To one day blossom in men's souls like flame."

Many hearts in many lands will join in the Requiem voiced in this tribute from Alice Ferrin Hensey:

"Softly bear him and slow,
Our latest hero-saint,
To his narrow bed and low,
While our hearts are sad
and faint.

Bury him here with psalms
Chanted by Afric's sons;
Bury him 'neath the palms
Where the swift Lokolo
runs.

Ah, he was one who bore the armour well!
Bearing the Word that fears nor death nor hell
Faced he right on into the battle's heat,
Scorning to name the coward word 'defeat.'

Into the jaws of sin's dark
hell, with song
Marched he, amid the vile
and savage throng,
Lifting the Cross before
their wond'ring sight,
Pointing the day-star of
death's age-long night.

Yet unto him a hundred-
fold and more
Have these been multiplied,
within the door
Of Africa's sad heart, where
he laid down
At last the burden for the
star-bright crown.

He was not one to reck the
bitter cost
Of winning Christ these
tribes, sin-bound and
lost,—
Father and mother, sons,
and native land
Left he uncounting, at his
Lord's command

The race for the goal ulti-
mate is run!
The good fight valorous at
last is won!
Almost our eyes can pierce
the far Unknown
And see him, victor-glad,
close by the Throne."

To us younger men he was as father and friend—somewhat as Paul was to Timothy and Mark and Titus. Few men were wiser in counsel, and to his kindly advice and help we owe more than words can tell.

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Personally, the writer feels a sense of deep loss, which grows with the years. Sometimes we misunderstood each other and clouds came between, but his kindly love never faltered and the last year of our fellowship was the richest of all.

Awaiting the dawning of that day when we shall know as we are known, it seems fitting that this Memorial close with these words to our Comrade, which were found marked in one of his books:

> "Until the shadows from this earth are cast,
> Until He gathers in His sheaves at last;
> Until the twilight gloom be overpast—
> 'Good-night! Good-night! Good-night!'"

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